BRITAIN'S LEADING HISTORICAL RAILWAY JOURNAL

BackTrack

Vol. 39 • No. 6

JUNE 2025

£5.85

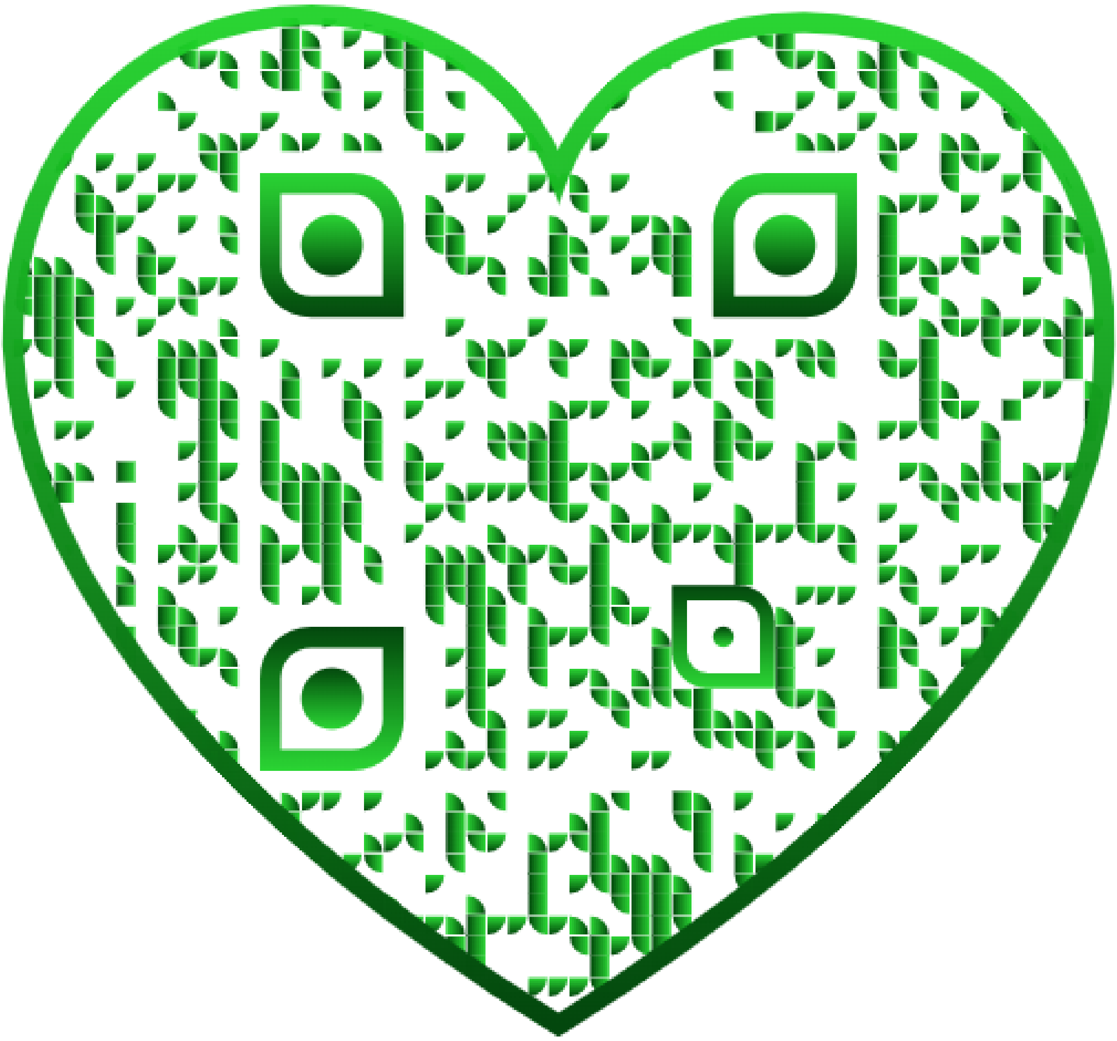
TORBAY EXPRESS
142

IN THIS ISSUE

- THE KINGSWEAR BRANCH IN COLOUR
- MISPLACED MIDLAND MAGNIFICENCE
- GWR No.9017 – A REMARKABLE SURVIVOR
- 'BRITS' DOWN UNDER
- THE NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE ELECTRICAL ENGINEER
- KING'S CROSS TO YORK IN COLOUR

PENDRAGON PUBLISHING

RECORDING THE HISTORY OF BRITAIN'S RAILWAYS



AVAILABLE FROM PENDRAGON

RAILWAYS IN RETROSPECT No.7

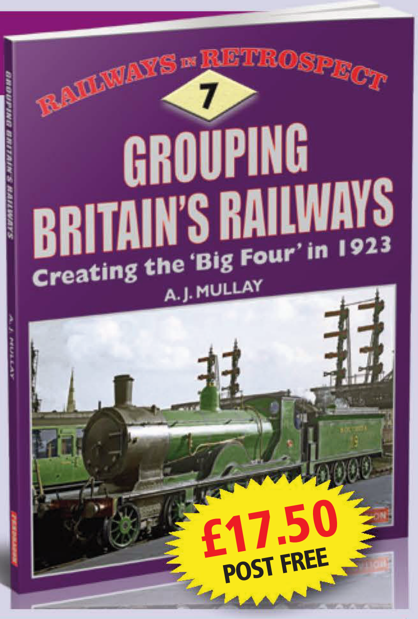
GROUPING BRITAIN'S RAILWAYS

BY A. J. MULLAY **Creating the 'Big Four' in 1923**

"The Grouping was unnecessary, its conception flawed, its planning muddled, and its execution clumsy."

That's the controversial conclusion reached in this new publication from Pendragon Publishing, the first history of the 1923 Grouping to be published in book form for many years. Lavishly illustrated, this book explores why the idea of compact, zonal, railway groups quickly emerged as something quite different, with new rival companies having no territorial rights, and with competition and duplication of routes remaining unchanged. Employing a blend of official archives, personal memoirs and contemporary publications – from The Times to the Boy's Own Paper – this unprecedented development in Britain's transport history is subjected to clinical examination.

88 pages, card covers | ISBN: 978-1-899816-22-4



£17.50 POST FREE

BackTrack

BackTrack Cumulative Index to Volumes 31-35

COMPILED BY TERRY PENFOLD

£7.50 inc. postage (UK only)

THE BackTrack CUMULATIVE INDEX TO VOLUMES 31-35

- In 2012 we brought you our Cumulative Index to Volumes 1 to 25.
- In 2017 came the supplementary index to Volumes 26-30.
- In 2022 we brought you up to date with what has been happening in Backtrack over the last five years...

Now you need the Cumulative Index to Volumes 31-35, 2017-2021!

12 pages containing over 5,000 listings, cross-referenced under 60 sub-headings, to help you find that subject you're looking for.

The previous Cumulative Indexes are available on our website: www.pendragonpublishing.co.uk

BACK ISSUES

The following back issues of BackTrack are available:

Vol.35 Nos. 3-12
Vol.36 Nos. 1-12
Vol.37 Nos. 1-12
Vol.38 Nos. 1-12
Vol.39 No. 1 onwards

All back issues **£7.00** PER COPY INC. P&P *From January 1st 2025*
Overseas readers should add 40% to the cost for Europe, 75% for outside Europe.

ORDERING

POST FREE IN THE UK

Book and back issue orders should be sent with cheque or postal order payable to Pendragon Publishing at:
PENDRAGON PUBLISHING, PO Box No.3, Easingwold, YORK YO61 3YS
(Overseas readers should pay by International Money Order, adding 40% for post/packing Europe and 75% outside Europe)
Telephone orders with credit card payments can be made on **01347 824397** (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm).

PENDRAGON BOOKS TRADE DISTRIBUTOR

WARNERS GROUP PUBLICATIONS plc.
The Maltings, West Street, Bourne, Lincolnshire PE10 9PH
Telephone: **01778 395046**
E-mail: **tradeaccountorders@warnersgroup.co.uk**

IMAGES SUPPLIED FOR USE IN FUTURE ISSUES OF BACKTRACK - GUIDELINES

In seeking to ensure that reproduction of photographs in either colour (CMYK) or Monochrome which are **supplied to us on CD or DVD media or prints** are of the highest standard your co-operation with the following would be greatly appreciated.

IMAGES SUPPLIED ON DISK - COLOUR AND MONO

To have been drum scanned **from original photographic prints or transparencies** as CMYK images at high resolution (300dpi) with a minimum width dimension of 216mm and saved in either .tiff or .jpeg format. **Scanning on a flat bed scanner can result in loss of detail in both shadow and highlight areas resulting in lack of definition in the whole image.**

IMAGES SUPPLIED AS PRINTS - COLOUR AND MONO

Please **do not** supply images that have been printed on an inkjet printer, even if on a 'photographic paper'. Due to the nature of inkjet prints these images have to be scanned out of focus losing detail and sharpened later resulting in poorer quality images. If prints are to be supplied they must be as **Contone (continuous tone) Prints** produced by the industry standard photographic reproduction method.

IN EVERY CASE **where possible, it is far better to supply original image(s) ensuring the continued high quality of Backtrack magazine**

Editorial
BackTrack
Vol. 39 · No. 6
No. 410
JUNE 2025
RECORDING THE HISTORY OF BRITAIN'S RAILWAYS

Tangled webs

This January's issue marked 21 years of *Backtrack* being produced under the Pendragon publishing name following the magazine's 'house move' from its former Cornish residence with Atlantic Transport Publishers, while rather alarmingly it also marked the 30th anniversary of the first *BT* produced under my editorship during David Jenkinson's regime at Atlantic. Twenty-one years used to be rather more of an anniversary occasion than perhaps it now has become and thirty years are neither owt nor nowt in the celebratory scheme of things, so we will move on.

However, taking over ownership of the magazine was a life-changing moment for me, for it involved a considerable amount of organisational input of the like that was new to me: finding printers, designer, subscription providers, distributors, setting up a Royal Mail account, a business bank account and a card payment system – it seemed such a lot and it all had to happen very swiftly so that the changeover went ahead with as little disruption to existing arrangements as possible. In fact, it largely did – and for that I was grateful for the help and encouragement of my former colleagues from the Atlantic era.

Of course, not everything went swimmingly – then or even now – but we got there in due course by hook or by crook. Once the magazine's course had been set, the time came to start considering how the service to our readers – current and potential – might be improved and a question which had arisen and needed answering was "Does Pendragon Publishing have a website?" And at that point it didn't...

Now, any who know me would agree that my computer skills are on a par with those of my domestic DIY abilities and I would have no more idea of how to set up a website than to construct my own furniture. However, as in so many aspects of life, it comes down not to *what* you know but *whom* you know...

So on to the scene came Derek Gillibrand whose acquaintance goes back to the old school in Bury and with whom I shared the supporting of Bury FC at which we occupied adjacent seats in the main stand. There we shared the trials and tribulations of the lower division football fan: disappointment, misery and the occasional storming season which makes it all worthwhile. More to the point, though, Derek was an early escaper from the banking world where he practised in the 'dark arts' of 'IT'; he must, I thought, know how to weave a website for Pendragon. An initial enquiry generated an encouraging response and so one Saturday evening after watching a home win we adjourned to the nearby Swan & Cemetery for a glassful and a plateful, discussed what I'd like and what he could do, a 'heads of agreement' was reached and I paid the bill, the whole thing following a long-standing Pendragon tradition of settling important matters in licensed premises.

The 'www.pendragonpublishing.co.uk' website was first announced to an expectant world in February 2007 and with a bit of fine tuning along the way and monthly updating it has functioned under Derek's stewardship since then. Hopefully it has proved useful for readers and there's enough evidence to suggest it has. Now, after eighteen years as Pendragon's IT Consultant, Derek has decided it's time to step away from the keyboard and retire his mouse. So thanks, Derek, for all your valued support in the *BT* backroom over this time – a good job well done.

But as one website is taken down, a new one has been woven. The Dept. of Administrative Affairs has been on the case with customary assiduity and has negotiated with Warners Group to take over the website and run it on our behalf. Derek has been working with the Warners people to transfer the important pages to the new custodian's web of webs and the opportunity has been taken to simplify the content, retaining what is needed, clearing away some items which seemed to be no longer necessary. Experience will indicate what adjustments might be needed and your comments and suggestions will be carefully considered.

It had been my guarded expectation that we would emerge from this untangling with having to adopt a new identity for the website but I'm pleased to report, with some relief, it transpires that won't be necessary – www.pendragonpublishing.co.uk will take you there just the same.

*****

I'm sure you will have heard in the news during March that Messrs. W. H. Smith had put all its High Street stores up for sale and many readers who buy their copies of *Backtrack* from one of them, or from local newsagents for which WHS was wholesaler, might have wondered what the implications of this would be. At the end of March came news that the sale of the WHS High Street business to Modella Capital had been confirmed and the new owners will be rebranding the stores as TG Jones. The early information from our distribution manager at Warners is that the new owners plan to invest in the stores and indeed increase the number of them. This change is expected to come into effect around the end of this month and we have a cautious indication that it's good news – let's hope so but as always that obviously remains to be seen... What does remain true is that taking out a subscription to *Backtrack* remains the best way of ensuring your regular copy – not least for us! Look on our website...

The WHS sell-off applies only to the town centre shops; the stalls and outlets at railway stations will continue under that name, also those at airports and hospitals – so perhaps good news if you're taking a train or even a plane or are detained by the NHS. According to a *BT* article in 1994 on 'Railway Bookstalls', W. H. Smith's selling of books and periodicals on stations goes back to 1848 on the London & North Western Railway. However, an early account of station bookstalls lambasted them for "...attracting to their light all manner of squalid humanity... and selling cheap, trashy reading matter, of the lowest possible character..." But at least you might be able to get your *Backtrack* there

Michael Blakemore

Contents

Found in Kent 324
Brits down under – Part One: British-built Locomotives on the Colliery Railway of J. & A. Brown, New South Wales, Australia 326
The Bishop's Waltham Branch – Part Two 330
No.9017 – A Remarkable Survivor 335
Britain's Railways and the Boer War 1899-1902 – Part Two 344
Lights Out 348
Gone West 352
Misplaced Midland Magnificence 356
Little things mean a lot 365
Following the Route of the '10.00' 368
Andrew Frederick Rock 1859-1930 – The Knotty's Telegraph Superintendent and Electrical Engineer 372
A Woodhouse Station Family 380
Readers' Forum 381
Book Reviews 382

GWR 'Castle' 4-6-0 No.5034 *Corfe Castle* near Churston with the Paddington–Kingswear 'Torbay Express' on 18th July 1958.
(Trevor Owen/Colour-Rail.com 390335)

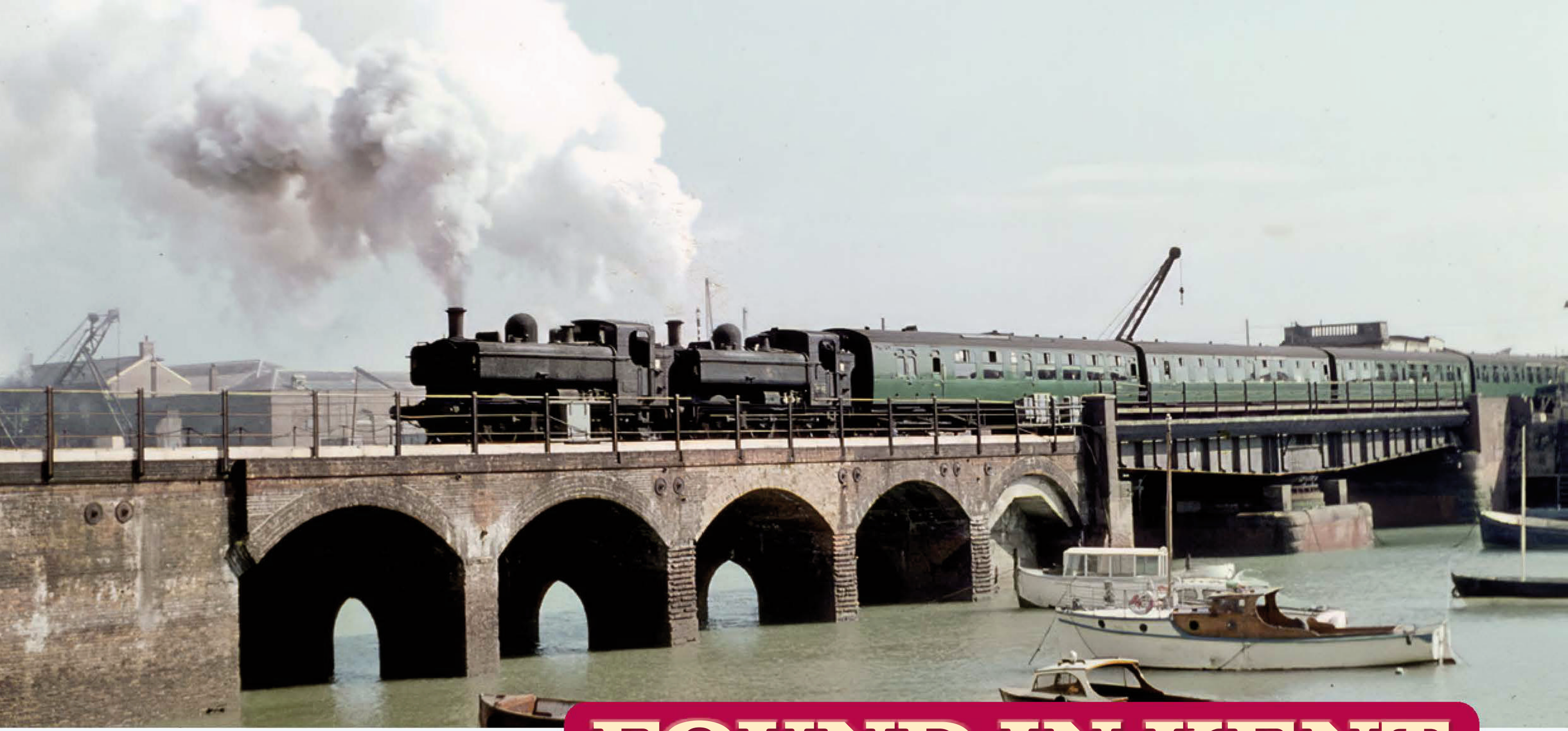
Publisher and Editor **MICHAEL BLAKEMORE** • E-Mail **pendragonpublishing@btinternet.com** • Tel **01347 824397** [Mon.-Fri. 9.00am-5.00pm]
All Subscription Enquiries 01778 392024 *(see inside back cover for details)* • Trade Account Manager **Ann Williams**
Design + Repro **Barnabus Design in Print** • Typesetting **Melinda Trevivian**
Printed by **Elgar Books Ltd., 10 Bradshaw Crescent, Honley, Holmfirth, West Yorkshire, HD9 6EG.**
Newstrade Distribution **Warners Group Publications Plc • Tel. 01778 391135**

Contributions of material both photographic and written, for publication in BACKTRACK are welcome but are sent on the understanding that, although every care is taken, neither the editor or publisher can accept responsibility for any loss or damage, however or whichever caused, to such material. ● Opinions expressed in this journal are those of individual contributors and should not be taken as reflecting editorial policy. All contents of this publication are protected by copyright and may not be reproduced in any form or by any means without the prior written permission of the publishers . ● Copies of photographs appearing in BACKTRACK are not available to readers.

All editorial correspondence to: **PENDRAGON PUBLISHING • PO BOX No.3 • EASINGWOLD • YORK YO61 3YS • www.pendragonpublishing.co.uk**

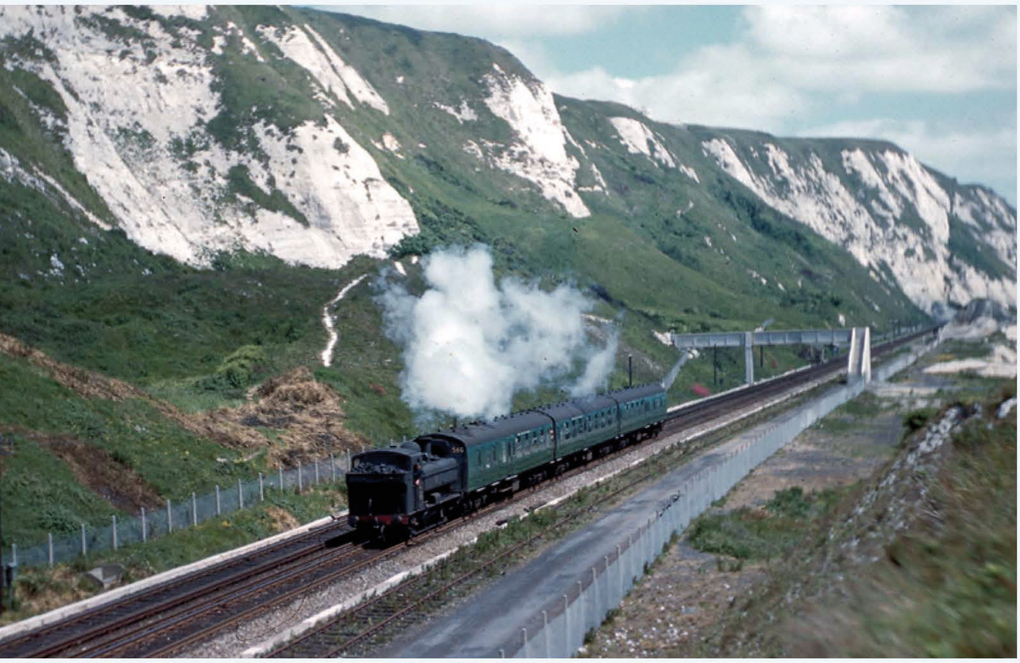
PENDRAGON PUBLISHING

© PENDRAGON PUBLISHING 2025

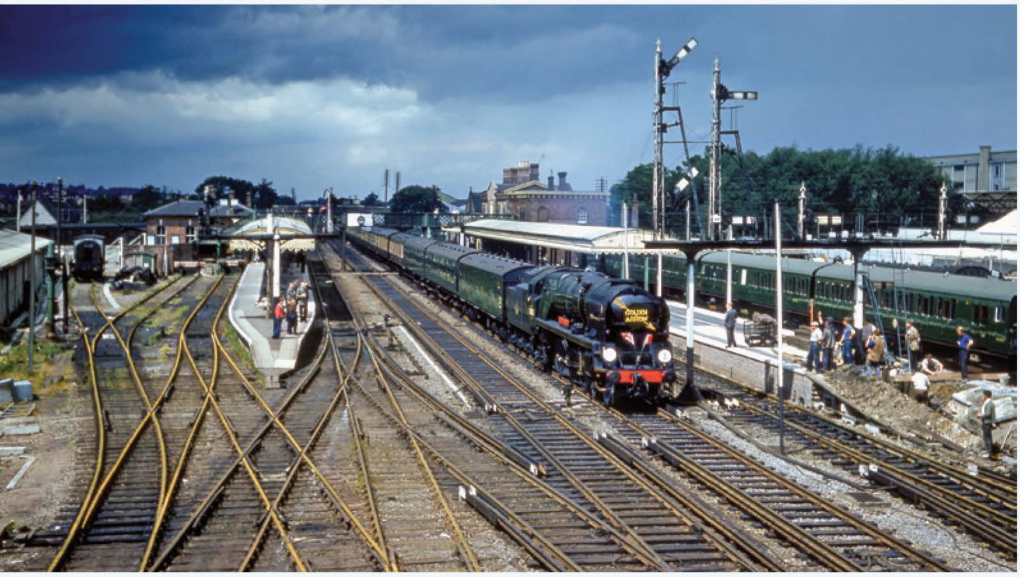


FOUND IN KENT

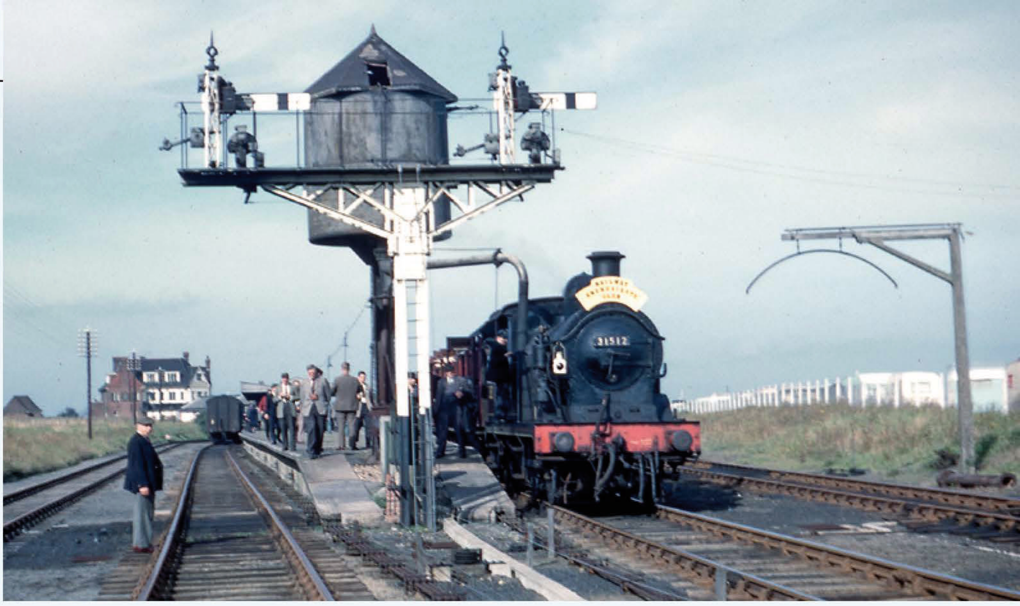
ABOVE: **The year 1959 saw great changes to the railway scene in Kent but one of the most remarkable developments occurred in January when six Great Western Railway pannier tank locomotives were transferred from South Wales to Dover. The engines were actually based at Folkestone Junction sub-shed principally for working heavy boat trains up the 1 in 30 gradient between Folkestone Harbour and the junction with the main line where the shed was located. The pannier tank locomotives replaced South Eastern & Chatham Class R1 0-6-0Ts that were rebuilds of Class R 0-6-0Ts originally introduced in 1888. Trials with other classes had taken place on the branch but none was deemed suitable. Sometimes three locomotives could be seen at head of a train from the Harbour station with another pushing at the rear. In this 1961 portrait two unidentified GWR tanks are seen leaving Folkestone Harbour station and are about to charge up the daunting bank to the junction. The photographer recorded that the load was a massive twelve coaches and two vans.**
(Martin Smith)



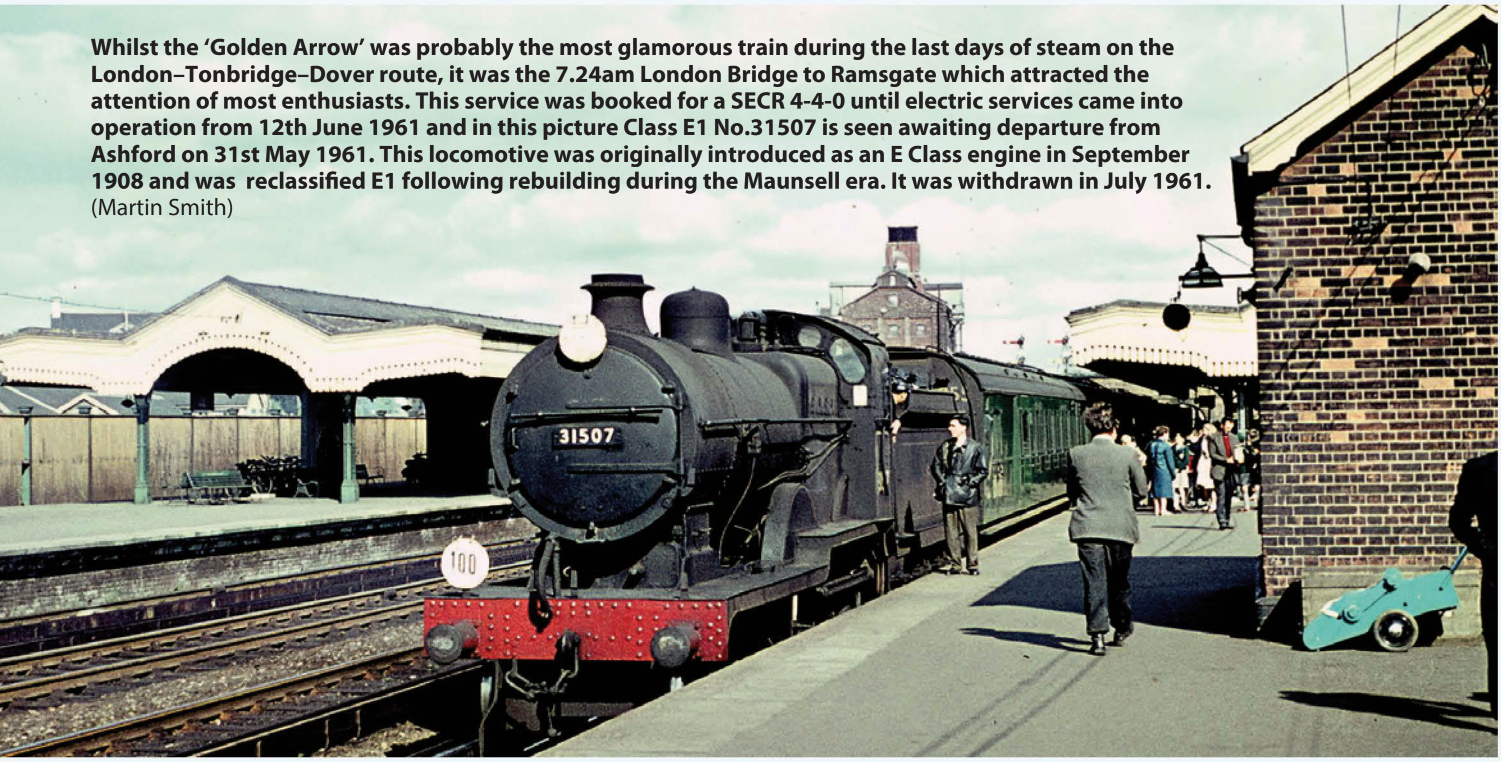
LEFT: **While the duties of the GWR pannier tank locomotives at Dover were mainly powering the boat workings to and from Folkestone Harbour, the locomotives presumably made frequent trips between Folkestone and Dover for routine maintenance for which the former did not have the facilities. Here, No.4610 is depicted steaming through Folkestone Warren apparently at the head of an empty stock working with the majestic White Cliffs providing an unmistakable backdrop. No.4610 had previously been based at Barry in South Wales so a transfer to the Kent coast represented quite a change of scene.**
(Martin Smith)



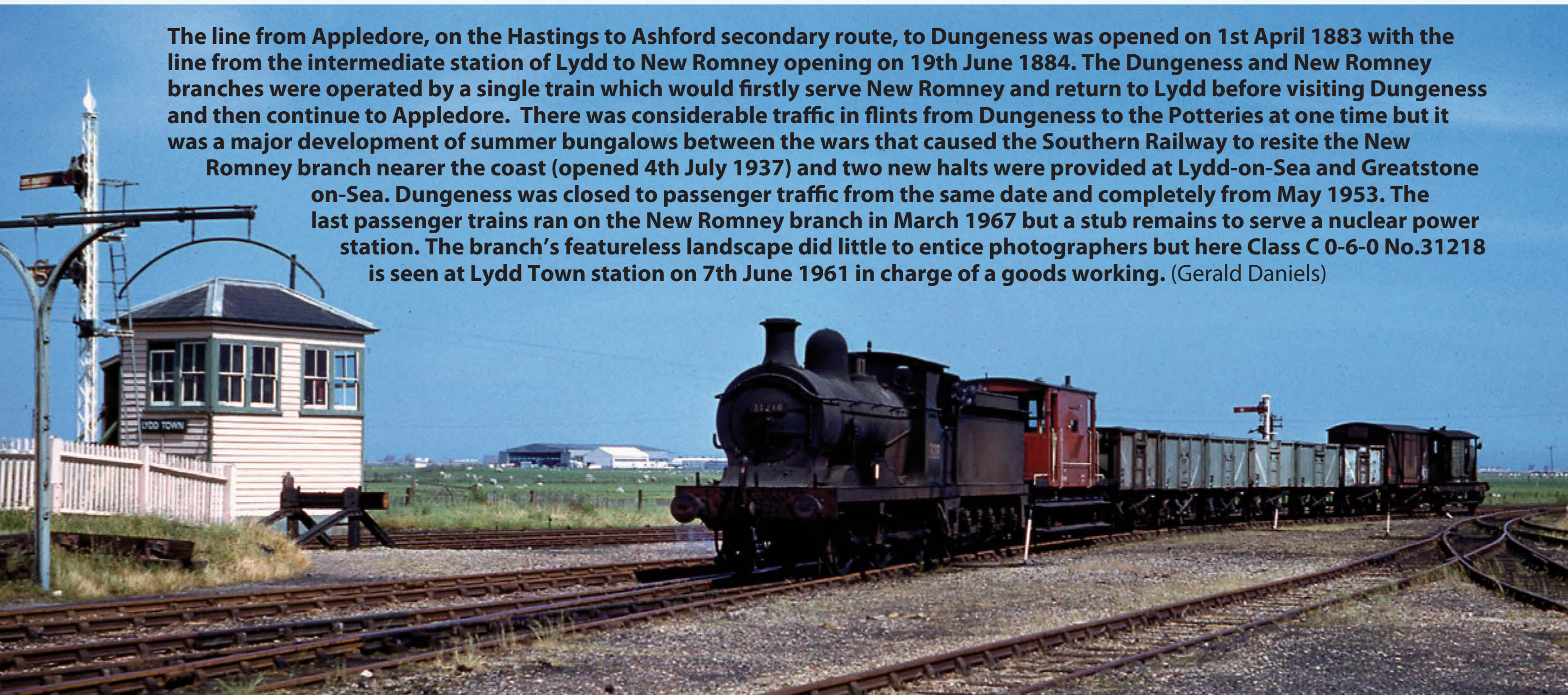
BOTTOM: **The stylish and opulent 'Golden Arrow' offered unrivalled passenger comfort for those heading across the Channel. The idea of an exclusive train linking London and Paris can be traced back to 1889 but many years passed before the 'Golden Arrow' took to the rails on 15th May 1929. Storm clouds have gathered to mark the last steam-hauled service on 11th June 1961 as 'West Country' Pacific No.34100 *Appledore* races through Paddock Wood.**
(Gerald Daniels)



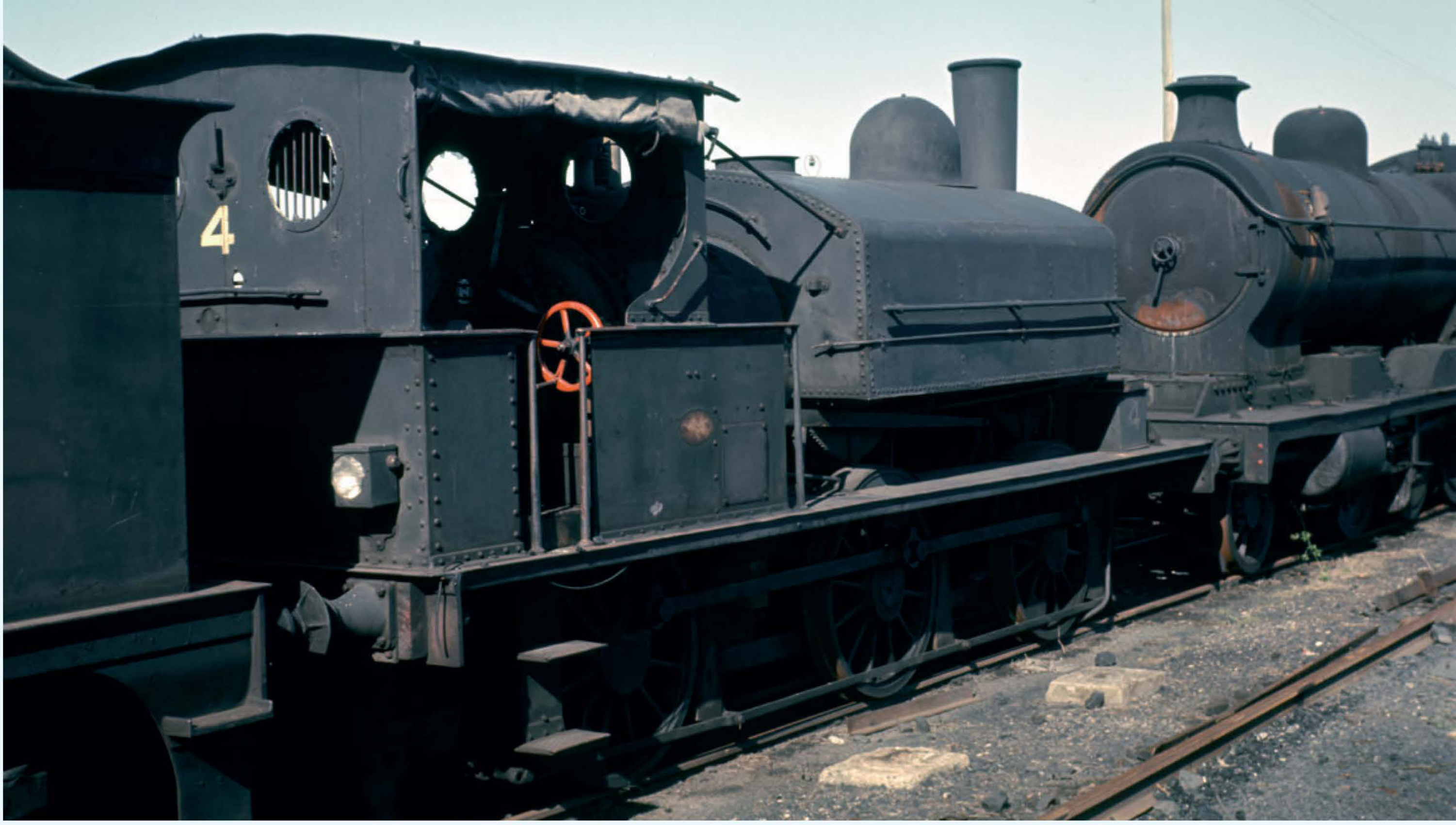
Eleven miles of single track line were opened in 1882 from Hoo Junction, near Gravesend on the North Kent line, to Port Victoria on windswept Hoo peninsula of the Isle of Grain. From Port Victoria a ferry connected with Dutch steamers at Queenborough but the link proved inconvenient for passengers, the ferry ceasing in 1901, and in 1916 the pier at Port Victoria was declared unfit and closed, the line being cut back to Grain. The area saw considerable industrial activity, however; the branch prospered and on 14th May 1932 the Southern Railway opened a 1¾ miles-long branch from Stoke Junction to Allhallows-on-Sea. The Southern had high hopes that Allhallows would develop into a resort rivalling established Kent coast holiday centres. It was a bleak spot but, despite that, 6,500 hardy souls visited during the remainder of 1932, though Allhallows never became as popular as the SR envisaged. The summer 1957 timetable listed ten trains both ways on weekdays between Gravesend and Allhallows with a token service to Grain presumably for workers at a large oil refinery which opened in 1951. The final passenger service from Allhallows ran on 3rd December 1961, one of the shortest-lived branch lines in history. Class H 0-4-4T No.31512 poses with a railtour at Allhallows, amid a largely empty hinterland, on 24th September 1960. The rest of the line to Grain is still busy with freight traffic. (Gerald Daniels)



Whilst the 'Golden Arrow' was probably the most glamorous train during the last days of steam on the London–Tonbridge–Dover route, it was the 7.24am London Bridge to Ramsgate which attracted the attention of most enthusiasts. This service was booked for a SECR 4-4-0 until electric services came into operation from 12th June 1961 and in this picture Class E1 No.31507 is seen awaiting departure from Ashford on 31st May 1961. This locomotive was originally introduced as an E Class engine in September 1908 and was reclassified E1 following rebuilding during the Maunsell era. It was withdrawn in July 1961. (Martin Smith)



The line from Appledore, on the Hastings to Ashford secondary route, to Dungeness was opened on 1st April 1883 with the line from the intermediate station of Lydd to New Romney opening on 19th June 1884. The Dungeness and New Romney branches were operated by a single train which would firstly serve New Romney and return to Lydd before visiting Dungeness and then continue to Appledore. There was considerable traffic in flints from Dungeness to the Potteries at one time but it was a major development of summer bungalows between the wars that caused the Southern Railway to resite the New Romney branch nearer the coast (opened 4th July 1937) and two new halts were provided at Lydd-on-Sea and Greatstone on-Sea. Dungeness was closed to passenger traffic from the same date and completely from May 1953. The last passenger trains ran on the New Romney branch in March 1967 but a stub remains to serve a nuclear power station. The branch's featureless landscape did little to entice photographers but here Class C 0-6-0 No.31218 is seen at Lydd Town station on 7th June 1961 in charge of a goods working. (Gerald Daniels)



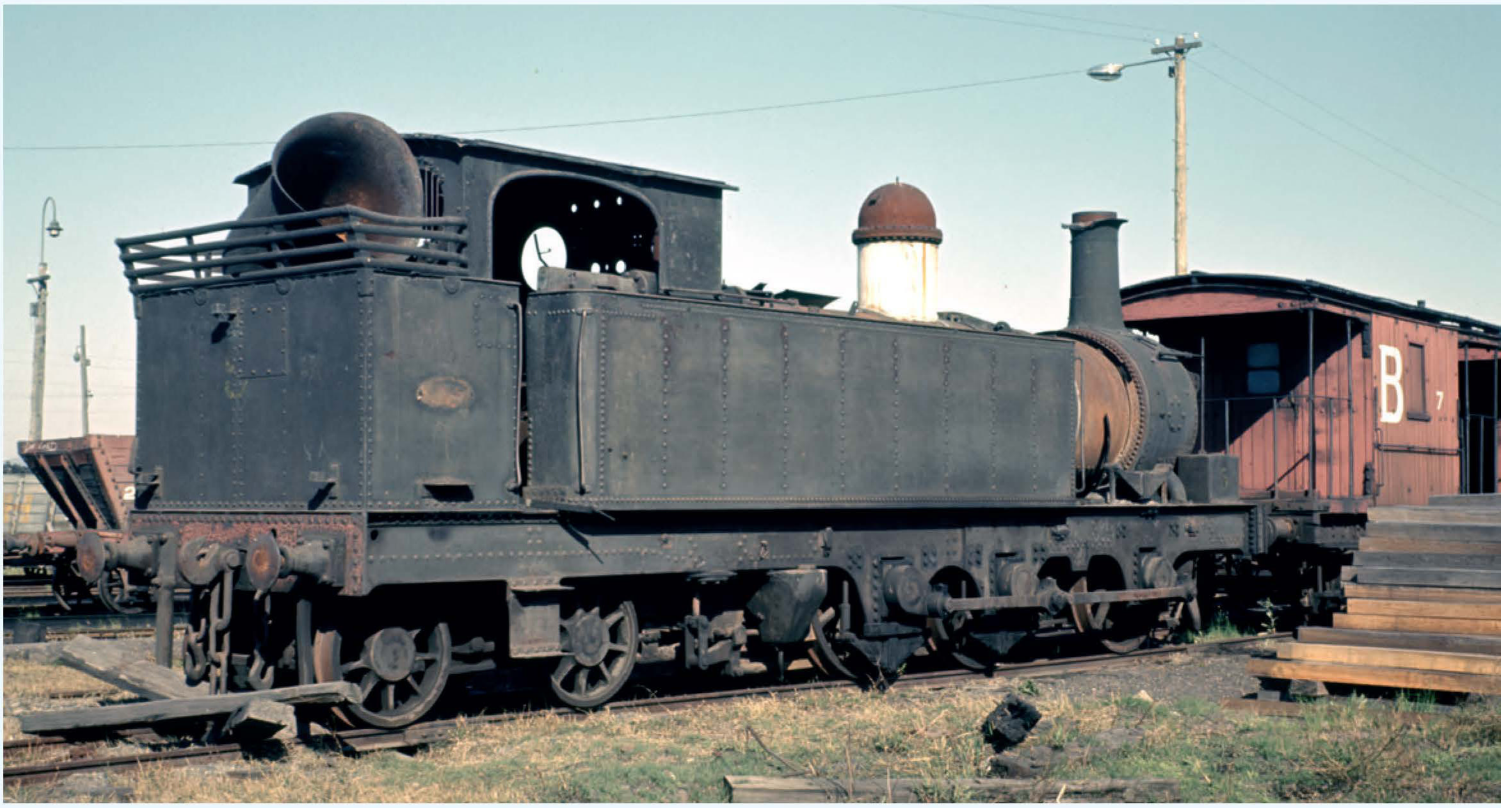
J. & A. Brown No.4, an 0-6-0ST by Kitson of Leeds. It had only been withdrawn about nine months before this photograph was taken in 1968, having had a working life of around 97 years.

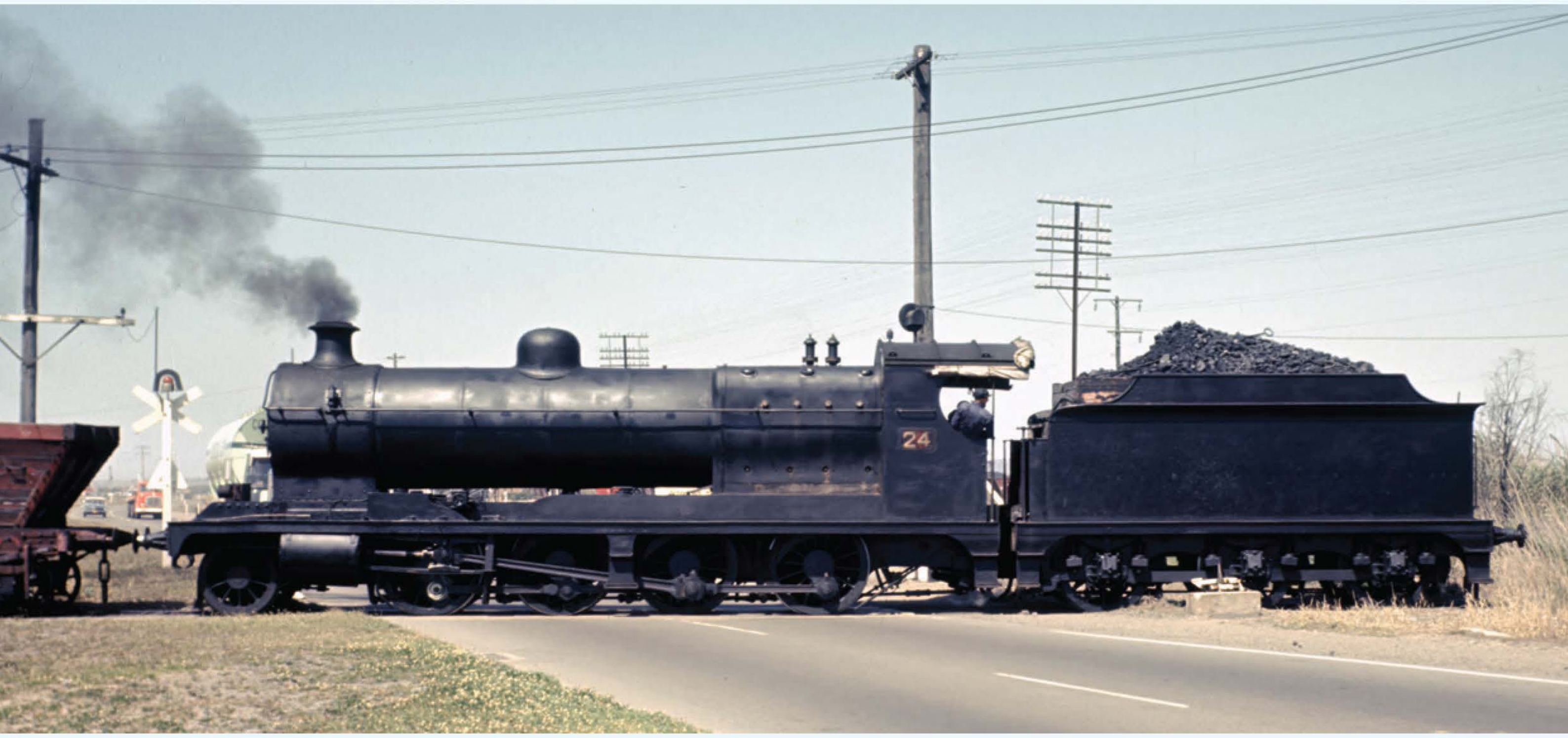
BRITS DOWN UNDER PART ONE BRITIS RAILWAY OF J. & A. BROWN, NEW SOUTH W

Britain was once a major supplier of steam locomotives to the world and was fortunate to have a ready market for its products in what was then its empire. Australia in particular seems to have had a long association with British locomotive manufacturers. In this, the first of two articles about British-built locomotives working in Australia, we describe those used on the colliery railways operated by J. & A. Brown in New South Wales, the accompanying photographs being taken on a visit there in September 1968.

This had its origin in a line built in 1856 connecting a colliery at Minmi with the port facilities on the Hunter River at Hexham, a distance of around six miles (Hexham is the most northerly suburb of Newcastle, New South Wales, and lies about ten miles upriver from the mouth of the Hunter River). The colliery had been purchased by J. & A. Brown from the original owners in 1859 and in the following decades they opened several new collieries in the Minmi area, all connecting with the original short line to Minmi Colliery. J. & A. Brown also

Looking a bit the worse for wear, J. & A. Brown No.5 *The Major,* a Beyer Peacock locomotive built originally for the Mersey Railway, languishes in the line of withdrawn engines at Hexham, New South Wales, in September 1968. In contrast to No.4, it had been withdrawn as long ago as 1942, so perhaps after a good quarter of a century out of use at Hexham, its condition is not too surprising. It is now preserved at the NSW Rail Museum at Thirlmere.





J. & A. Brown 2-8-0 No.24 (formerly ROD No.2003) trundles across an open crossing at Hexham, NSW, with a train of coal wagons on 24th September 1968. Just visible above the third driving wheel is the scar left by the elliptical maker's plate used by the Great Central's Gorton Works.

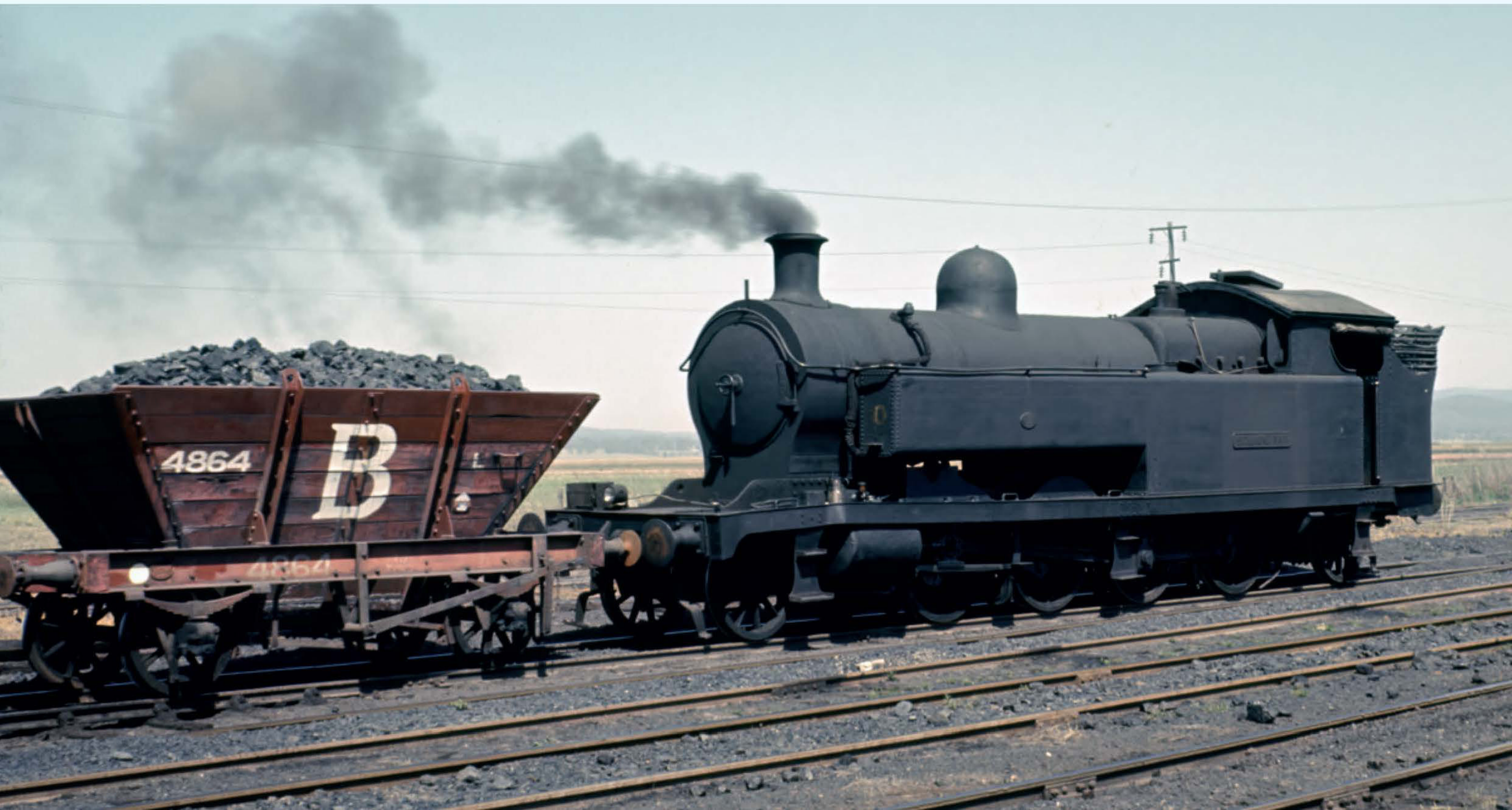
H-BUILT LOCOMOTIVES ON THE COLLIERY ALES, AUSTRALIA

BY ROBIN AND THOMAS SELLERS

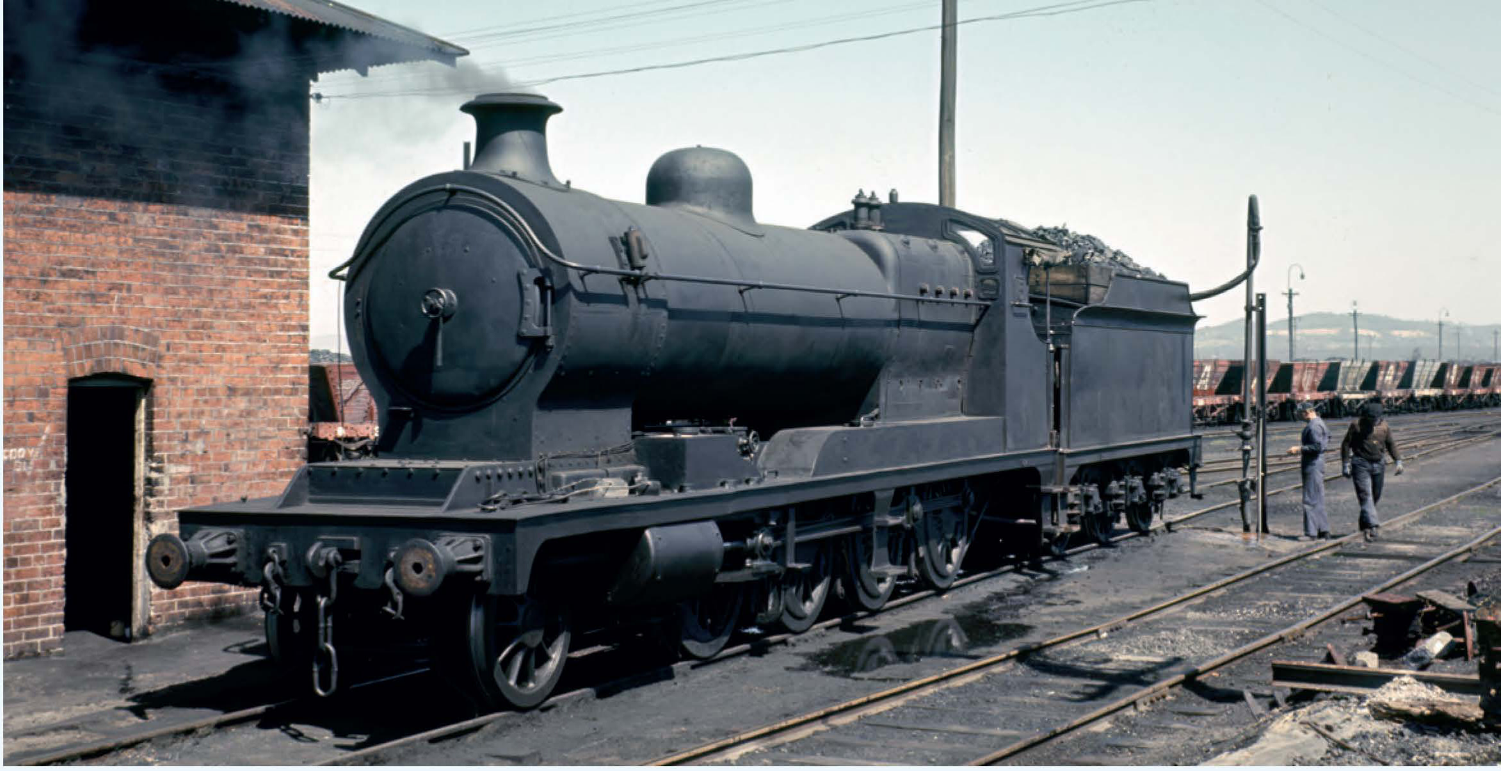
owned a number of collieries further inland and in the first decade of the twentieth century constructed a new line, some sixteen miles long and known as the Richmond Vale Railway, to connect these with the coal staithes at Hexham. It joined the original Minmi line about four miles from Hexham.

In 1930 J. & A. Brown amalgamated with Abermain Seaham Collieries, the new entity being known as J. & A Brown and Abermain Seaham Collieries, usually abbreviated to JABAS. This, in turn, merged with another colliery and mining company in 1960 to form Coal & Allied, the JABAS name being retained for the coal-mining operations part of the new company. The Minmi area collieries had all closed by the 1950s and, following a slump in demand, several of those at the northern end of the main Richmond Vale line, including Richmond Main and Pelaw Main Collieries, had ceased operations by 1967. At the time the accompanying photographs were taken, therefore, only the southernmost six miles of the Richmond Vale line serving a colliery at Stockrington survived.

All the motive power used by J. & A. Brown was of British origin. The first two locomotives on the Minmi line were 0-4-2Ts, J. & A. Brown



J. & A. Brown 2-8-2T No.10 *Richmond Main,* built by Kitson & Co. of Leeds, has just arrived at Hexham with a train from the nearby coal-washing and screening plant. Note the unusual position of the number on the forward-facing end of the side tank – and the distorted front end of the running plate. The 10-ton hoppers in this and the other photographs shown here were the mainstay of operations on the Richmond Vale line.



J. & A. Brown 2-8-0 No.15 fills up with water. Note the absence of any identifying number on the locomotive's front end, the position of the number above the hand rail on the cab side and the mark left by the maker's plate above the second driving wheel.

Nos.1 and 2, both built by R. & W. Hawthorn of Newcastle upon Tyne (details of maker's numbers etc are collected together in the table opposite). They were joined by two 0-6-0STs, J. & A. Brown No.3, purchased new from Kitson & Company of Leeds, and J. & A. Brown No.4, another Kitson locomotive supplied new to contractors building part of the main line running north from Newcastle, New South Wales, to Queensland.

The construction of the main Richmond Vale line, with its steeper gradients, required more powerful locomotives than were necessary for the line to Minmi, and to this end J. & A. Brown purchased four ex-Mersey Railway 0-6-4Ts, all of which had been built by Beyer, Peacock & Co. of Manchester. They had become surplus to requirements following the electrification of the Mersey Railway in 1903. The last of these four locomotives, J. & A. Brown No.5, was finally withdrawn in 1942.

The ex-Mersey railway 0-6-4Ts did not live up to expectations and as a result J. & A. Brown appointed Kitson & Company of Leeds to design and build a locomotive more suited to the conditions on the Richmond Vale line. The result was an impressive-looking 2-8-2T, based on the Great Central Railway's Class 8A 0-8-0 tender locomotives which Kitson had built for the Great Central. Three were produced, becoming J. & A. Brown No.9 *Pelaw Main,* No.10 *Richmond Main* and No.11 *Hexham* – the names are those of J. & A. Brown's three engine sheds. No.11 was withdrawn in 1949, but the other two continued in operation intermittently for anther 30 or so years. Both are now preserved.

The Kitson 2-8-2Ts were the mainstay of motive power on the Richmond Vale line until the mid-1920s, when they were superseded by another class of locomotive based on a Great Central Railway design, J. G. Robinson's Class 8K 2-8-0 goods locomotives of 1911. An acute shortage of motive power to haul heavy goods trains had arisen in Britain during the First World War and to meet the demand the War Department in London procured some 521 locomotives based on the GCR's Class 8K design for the Railway Operating Division (ROD.) of the Royal Engineers – hence the ROD name by which they were generally known. A variety of manufacturers filled the orders, the North British Locomotive Company in Glasgow producing by far the largest number. With the cessation of hostilities many were loaned to British railway companies whilst they caught up with a backlog of overhauls, deferred as part of the war effort. Many were then placed in store before being sold off. The London & North Eastern Railway eventually acquired no fewer than 273 (becoming its Class O4 (see also photo feature in *Backtrack* 37/12, p36); others went to the Great Western and the London & North Western Railway. Another thirteen were purchased by J. & A. Brown. The first three arrived in 1926, the remaining ten being dismantled and shipped to Australia in crates on board the SS *Minmi,* a newly launched J. & A. Brown vessel making

J. & A. Brown 2-8-0 No.15 drifts into Hexham with a train of loaded coal hoppers.

its maiden voyage to its new home. They were gradually reassembled over the next few years, with the final one entering service in 1931. Ten had been manufactured by the North British Locomotive Co., two at the Gorton Works of the Great Central Railway in Manchester and one by Kitson & Co. of Leeds. The last in service was No.24, withdrawn in June 1973. Three of the thirteen have been preserved.

Following the withdrawal of the ROD locomotives, there remained a need for some replacement engines to work the short remaining part of the Richmond Vale line. Two so-called '10 Class' 2-8-2Ts were brought in from the South Maitland Railway (SMR), another part of the JABAS group of companies. The South Maitland had acquired fourteen of these locomotives from Beyer Peacock in Manchester, the earliest dating from 1912. At one time or another all fourteen saw use on the Hexham to Stockrington section of the Richmond Vale line. Finally, mention should be made of four other locomotives which saw service on the J. & A. Brown lines. The first, No.26, was a 2-6-4T built by Beyer Peacock in 1885, obtained by J. & A. Brown in 1948 from New South Wales Government Railways (NSWGR). The intention had been to use it at a new open cast mine at Minmi, but in the event it went to another part of the JABAS system and appears never to have seen proper service on the Richmond Vale line. A second Beyer Peacock locomotive, a 4-6-4T, was obtained from NSWGR and worked briefly at Hexham in the early 1970s. It appears to have retained its NSWGR number (3013) throughout its time with JABAS. The final locomotives to have seen service at Hexham were a pair Avonside Engine Company of Bristol 0-6-0 saddle tanks. They had been built for use on the lines around the Abermain Colleries and carried the numbers Abermain No.1 and Abermain No.2. No.1 was transferred to Hexham in 1955 to work at the new coal washing plant there. It was withdrawn in 1961 following damage to the boiler and in 1963 was replaced by Abermain No.2 which saw service until 1969. Both appear to have retained their Abermain Colliery numbers throughout the time they were at Hexham.

The following table is a summary of the builder's numbers and other details of the British-built locomotives mentioned in the text.

Further reading

www.australiansteam.com/JAB%.htm

www.en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Richmond_Vale_railway_line&oldid=1125682882

B. R.Andrews, 2007, *Coal, Railways and Mines – The Story of the Railways and Collieries of J. & A. Brown* (Iron Horse Press).

R. G..Preston, 1990, *The Richmond Vale Railway* (Shepp Books, Hornsby).

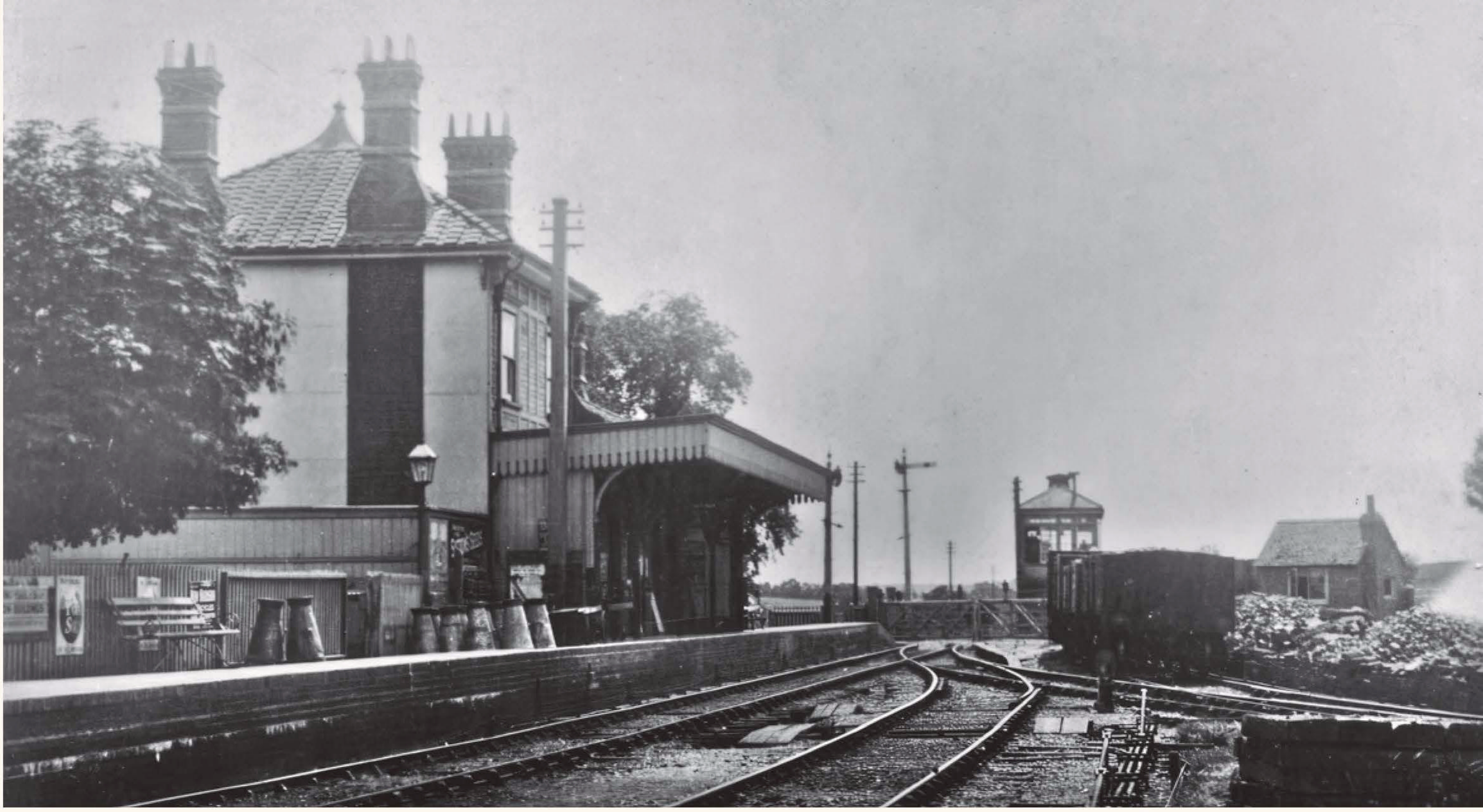
RS explains how these photographs came to be taken

In 1968 I was in receipt of an English-Speaking Union Scholarship to visit Australia. This sounds rather grand, but the reality was that a plane had been chartered, part-funded by the Australian Government (though we students also had to pay our share of the costs – it effectively took what little savings I had – to take a large group of British students to Australia for the duration of the long vacation. The idea seems to have been to attract soon-to-graduate British students to go and work in Australia. Whatever the intention, there is no doubt that this was a once in a lifetime opportunity, which I embraced with enthusiasm. I spent two months working for a sugar refining company in Sydney (and for the first time in my life, had money in my pocket to spend as I wished) and spent the final four weeks touring Australia. I was aware of the presence of the ex-ROD locomotives at Hexham and had long admired their simple, uncluttered appearance, the epitome of Edwardian elegance, at least as far as freight locomotives go. Towards the end of my stay I spent a day – as it happens a pleasant early spring day – at Hexham, watching and photographing what I could. The only drawback of being in Australia in the (boreal) summer of 1968 was that I missed the end of main line steam in Britain. The compensation was that I was able to see the British-built locomotives depicted here (and in a second selection to follow later in Part Two dealing with New South Wales Government Railways). On balance I can't help feeling that I got the better deal.

NORTH BRITISH LOCOMOTIVE
1918
QUEEN'S PARK WORKS.
Nº 22042
COMPANY, Lᵀᴰ GLASGOW

Maker's plate from J. & A. Brown No.20.

J. & A. Brown No.	Wheel arrangement	Builder	Other details
1	0-4-2T	R. & W. Hawthorn 947 0f 1856	Scrapped
2	0-4-2T	R. & W. Hawthorn 948 of 1856	Scrapped
3	0-6-0ST	Kitson & Co. 2236 of 1878	Scrapped
4	0-6-0ST	Kitson & Co. 1620 of 1870	Purchased by J. & A. Brown from New South Wales\Government Railways in 1890; withdrawn 1967 and now preserved.
5	0-6-4T	Beyer Peacock 2601 of 1885	Ex-Mersey Railway No.1 *The Major*; withdrawn 1942, now preserved.
6	0-6-4T	Beyer Peacock 2607 of 1886	Ex-Mersey Railway No,7 *Liverpool*; scrapped
7	0-6-4T	Beyer Peacock 2782 of 1886	Ex-Mersey Railway No.9 *Connaught*; scrapped.
8	0-6-4T	Beyer Peacock 2604 of 1885	Ex-Mersey Railway No.4 *Gladstone*; scrapped. So far as is known this locomotive did not have a name in its J. & A. Brown days, though the other three ex-Mersey Railway locos retained theirs.
9	2-8-2T	Kitson & Co. 4567 of 1908	Named *Pelaw Main*; preserved
10	2-8-2T	Kitson & Co. 4798 of 1911	Named *Richmond Main*; preserved
11	2-8-2T	Kitson & Co. 4834 of 1911	Named *Hexham*; scrapped
12	2-8-0	North British 22213 of 1919	R.O.D. 2123; scrapped 1968
13	2-8-0	North British 22209 of 1919	R.O.D. 2119; scrapped 1973
14	2-8-0	North British 22161 of 1919	R.O.D. 2070; scrapped 1973
15	2-8-0	North British 21866 of 1918	R.O.D. 1889; scrapped 1973
16	2-8-0	North British 21867 of 1918	R.O.D. 1890; scrapped 1973
17	2-8-0	North British 21886 of 1918	R.O.D. 1909; scrapped 1973
18	2-8-0	North British 22038 of 1918	R.O.D. 1980; scrapped 1968
19	2-8-0	North British 21918 of 1918	R.O.D. 1941; scrapped 1973
20	2-8-0	North British 22042 of 1918	R.O.D. 1984; preserved
21	2-8-0	Kitson & Co. 5201 of 1918	R.O.D. 1615; preserved
22	2-8-0	Great Central Rly, built 1918	R.O.D. 2002; scrapped 1973
23	2-8-0	Great Central Rly, built 1919	R.O.D. 2004; scrapped 1973
24	2-8-0	Great Central Rly, built 1919	R.O.D. 2003; preserved
26	2-6-4T	Beyer Peacock 2567 of 1885	Ex-NSWGR No.2013. It had been intended for use at the new Minmi opencast mine, but in the event went elsewhere; scrapped 1970.
'3013'	4-6-4T	Beyer Peacock 4456 of 1903	Ex-NSWGR No.3013; preserved. This locomotive appears never to have received a J. & A Brown number.
Abermain 1	0-6-0T	Avonside 1606 of 1911	Withdrawn in 1961 and scrapped in 1966
Abermain 2	0-6-0T	Avonside 1916 of 1922	Withdrawn in 1969, and later preserved
SMR 10	2-8-2T	Beyer Peacock 5520 of 1912	Preserved. These 14 '10' class locomotives were from the South Maitland Railway, all of which saw service on the Richmond Vale line at one time or another.
SMR 17	2-8-2T	Beyer Peacock 5790 of 1914	Preserved
SMR 18	2-8-2T	Beyer Peacock 5909 of 1915	Preserved
SMR 19	2-8-2T	Beyer Peacock 5910 of 1915	Preserved
SMR 20	2-8-2T	Beyer Peacock 5998 of 1920	Preserved
SMR 22	2-8-2T	Beyer Peacock 6055 of 1921	Preserved
SMR 23	2-8-2T	Beyer Peacock 6056 of 1921	Preserved
SMR 24	2-8-2T	Beyer Peacock 6125 of 1922	Preserved
SMR 25	2-8-2T	Beyer Peacock 6126 of 1923	Preserved
SMR 26	2-8-2T	Beyer Peacock 6127 of 1923	Preserved
SMR 27	2-8-2T	Beyer Peacock 6137 of 1923	Preserved
SMR 28	2-8-2T	Beyer Peacock 6138 of 1923	Preserved
SMR 30	2-8-2T	Beyer Peacock 6294 of 1926	Preserved
SMR 31	2-8-2T	Beyer Peacock 6295 of 1926	Preserved



Bishops Waltham station looking towards the level crossing gates in busier times (milk churns in abundance and a well-stocked coal yard) and showing the signal box opened in 1885 and closed in 1935. (John Alsop Collection)

THE BISHOP'S WAL

BRUCE LAWS concludes his account of this Hampshire branch line up to its closure in 1962.

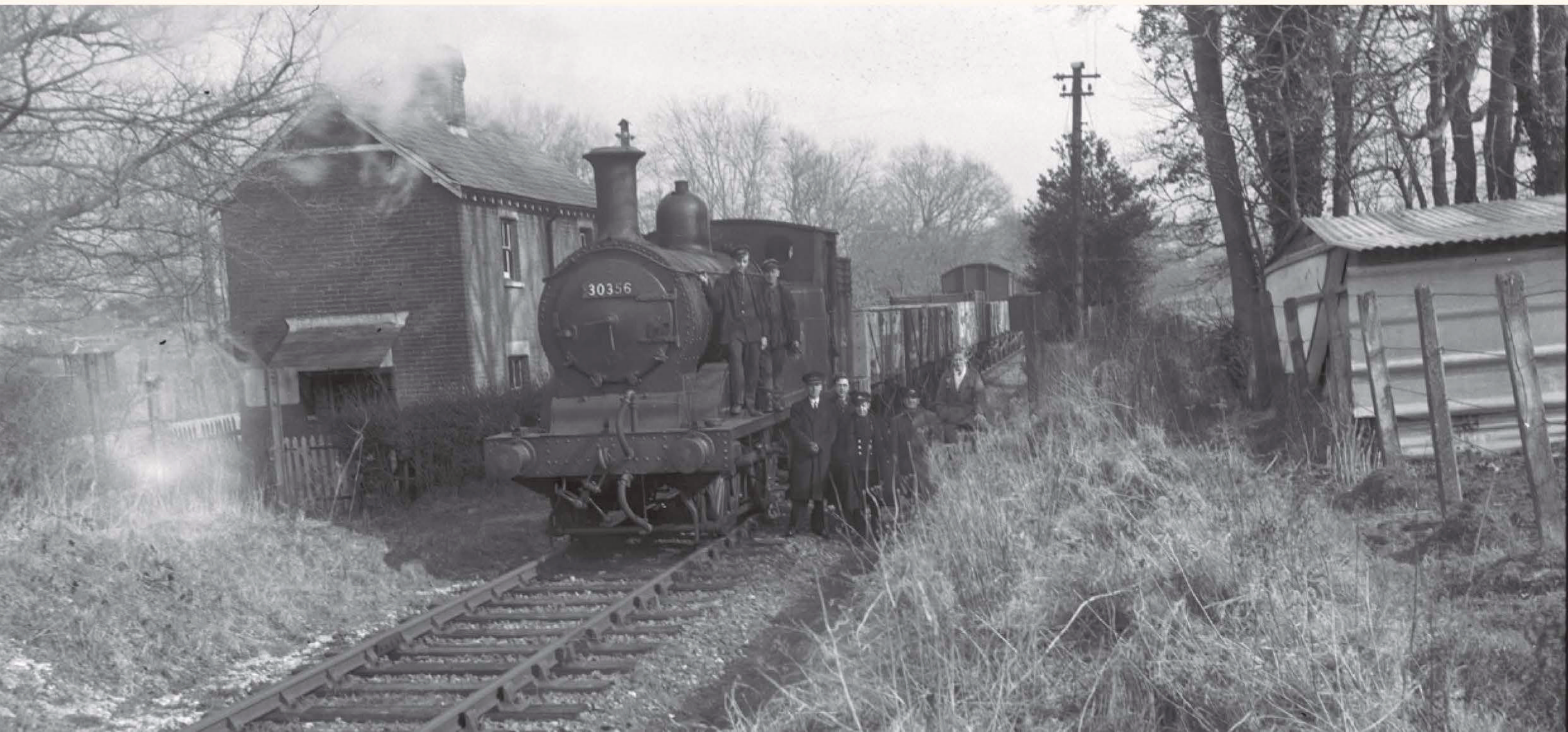
In Part One of this article I looked at the background to the Bishop's Waltham branch, the various abortive schemes to connect the town to the railway network, the coming of the Bishop's Waltham Railway (BWR) and its initial, somewhat shaky, period of operation. I will now take the story through to its rather sad but rather inevitable ending.

London & South Western Railway ownership

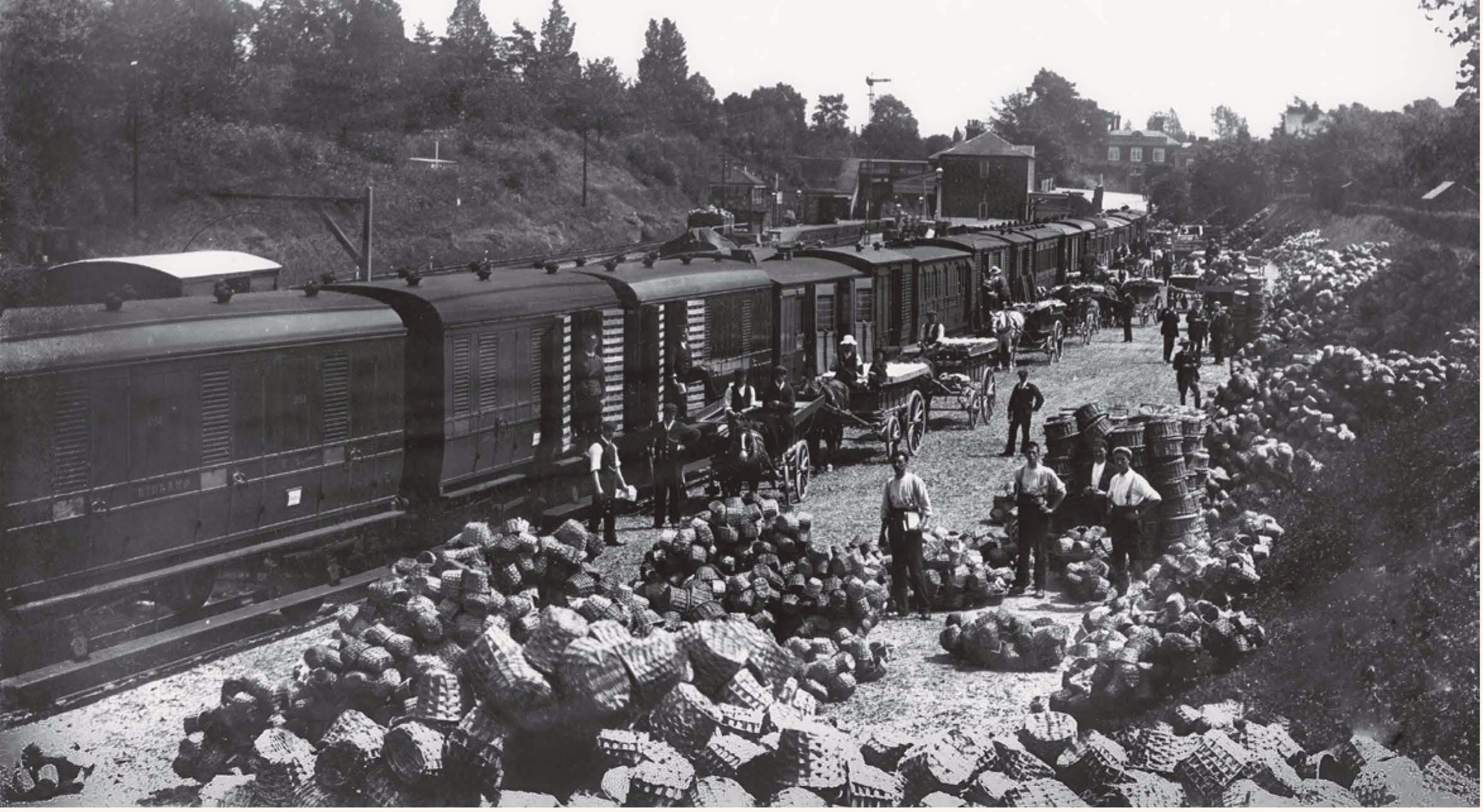
The London & South Western Railway speedily activated enhancements, the first of which was the introduction of an extra mid-morning return service in 1883 and an additional mid-afternoon return service in 1884. While the goods timetable was also improved, the new owners stubbornly declined to restore the Sunday train service. The signalling system on the line was modernised with a new signal box installed at Bishop's Waltham in 1885. Sited on the down side of the line immediately south of the Winchester Road level crossing, the box was characteristic of others in the area. It seems that it used a sixteen-lever (including two spare) Stevens frame.

During the 1880s the LSWR was seeking a site to relocate its main carriage works from the increasingly unsatisfactory and confined original site at Nine Elms, just outside its London Waterloo terminus. A group of local businessmen offered to site the works at Bishop's Waltham. The LSWR conducted a detailed study of the proposal, but a site at Eastleigh was chosen instead, being on the main line. Originally opened in 1891 as a carriage and wagon works, Eastleigh was subsequently much expanded to facilitate the relocation of the company's locomotive building workshops from Nine Elms. Consequently Eastleigh grew from a village smaller than Bishop's Waltham to a large industrial town centred on the works.

By this time coal was perhaps the most significant general product coming into Bishop's Waltham. Messrs. Geo. & Edwd. Clark, grocers, drapers, millers and maltsters, were the first coal merchants to operate from the station yard but for many years the main coal merchant was Messrs. Reeves & Tebbutt who opened an office by the level crossing in



LSWR M7 0-4-4T No.30356 at the site of Durley Halt with the 11.00am Botley goods on 12th March 1955. There is no shortage of staff to deal with it! (John Spencer Gilks/Pendragon Collection)



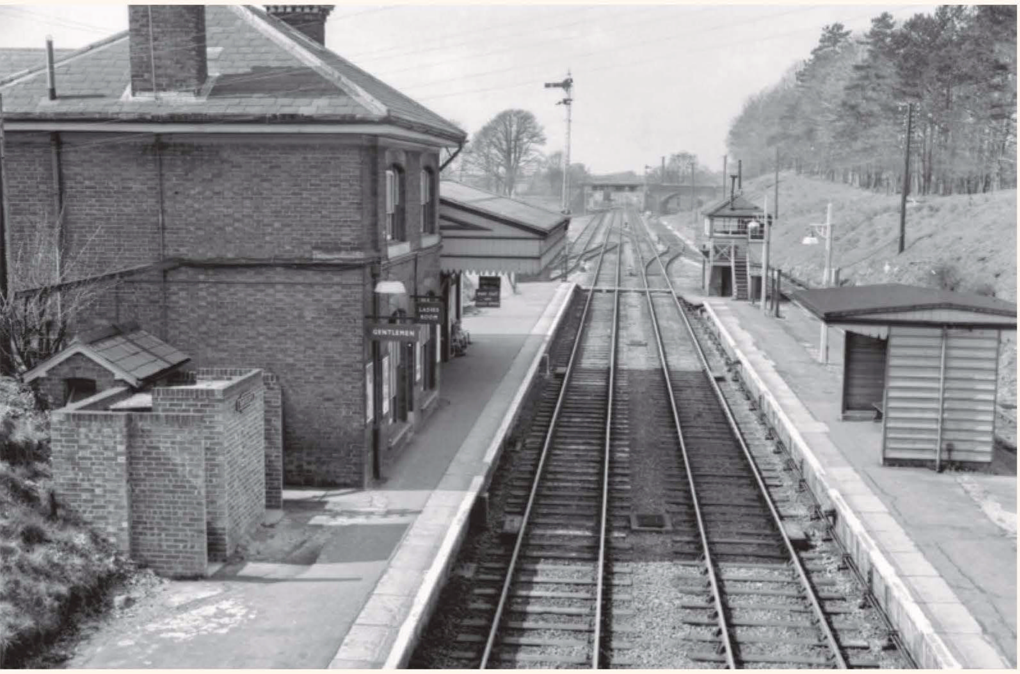
Botley station yard in 1907 with seemingly hundreds of stacked fruit baskets and many men loading a variety of stock including a Midland Railway van to the left of the picture.
(John Alsop Collection)

THAM BRANCH PART TWO

1890. From 1910 the former Reeves & Tebbutt coal office was occupied by the Colliery Supply Co. and later by Portsmouth-based merchants Messrs. J. E. Smith who remained there until closure in 1962. Over the years numerous other coal merchants operated from the site, generally renting space at the far end of the yard close to the goods shed.

Another significant outward-bound product handled by the yard was farm produce, with Bishop's Waltham becoming the railhead for many farms in the lower Meon Valley. The majority of this produce was arable – comprising largely cereal crops and sugar beet – but soft fruit and dairy products were also imperative, with churns of milk being shipped from the station daily. Indeed the line usually saw a period of frenzied and substantial use in the summer months during the strawberry harvest. Southern Hampshire, including the area around Bishop's Waltham, Botley, Fareham and Titchfield, was the UK's main strawberry growing region and during the harvest there was a near-continuous stream of special trains from the region to the London markets. To facilitate this the original loop on the single siding at Botley was removed and replaced with two parallel sidings running along the south side of the dock. The area between these two new sidings and the perimeter of the yard was where strawberries were loaded on to special trains of ventilated vans. Around 1900 a 55yd private siding was laid ½-mile south of the station on the down side to serve the Abbey Brewery of Messrs. Edward & Sons. The siding handled mostly hops and malt, but also some farm traffic, mainly from nearby Brooklands Farm.

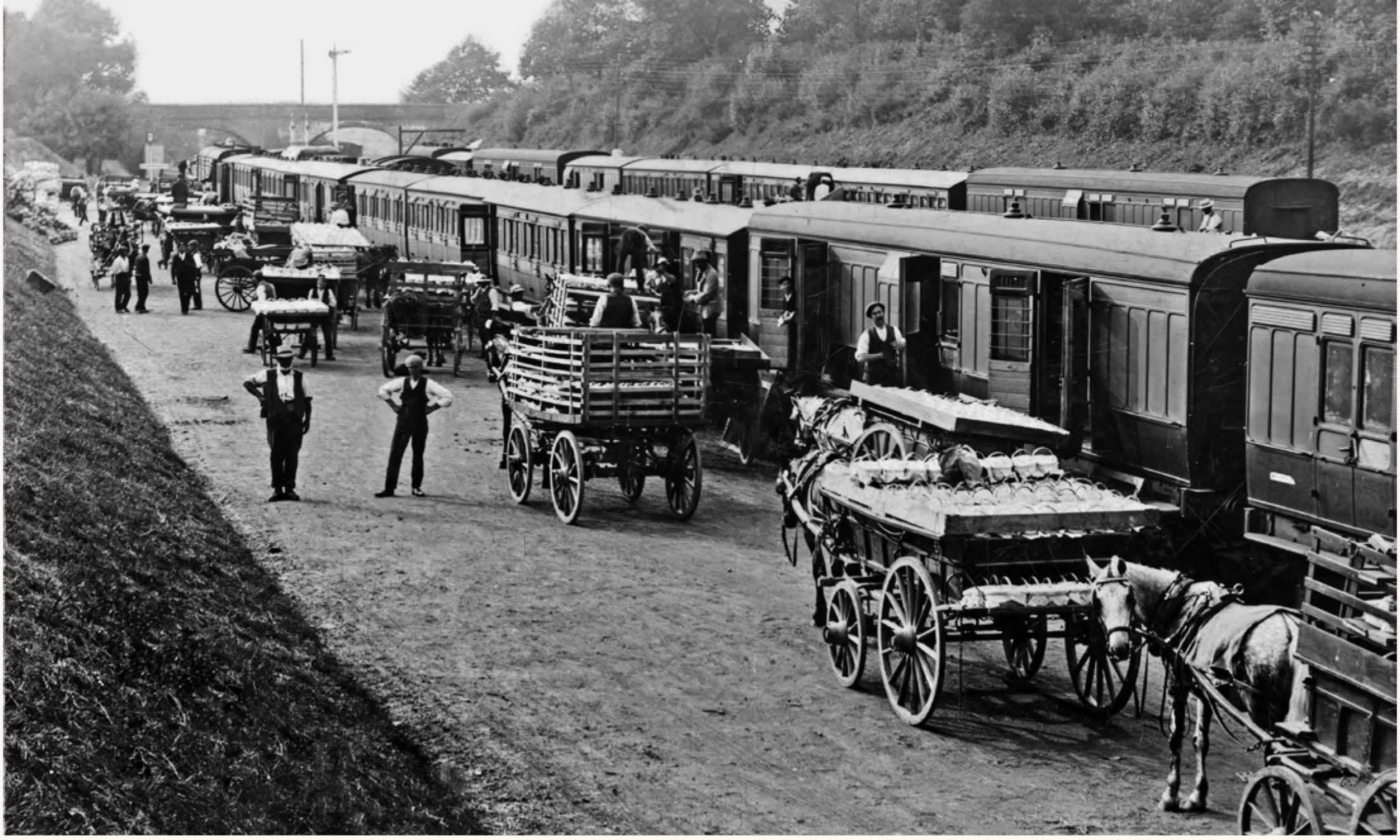
Botley station on 19th April 1963. View north west towards Eastleigh showing nicely the station buildings, the shelter on the island platform, the signal box and the branch curving away under the distant bridge to the right.
(Copyright Ben Brooksbank and licensed for reuse under Creative Commons Licence)



By the turn of the twentieth century Bishop's Waltham had a staff of seven comprising a Class 4 station master, a booking office clerk, two porter/signalmen, one goods clerk, one porter/guard and one passenger guard. Other staff were based at the engine shed.

In 1883 there had been a suggestion that the branch should be lengthened a few miles east to Droxford but nothing came of this. An extension to Droxford was once more projected in 1901, during the building of the LSWR's Meon Valley Railway which would run through Droxford on its way from Alton to Fareham. This time, some local investors formed a company to construct a line from Bishop's Waltham to the new station at Droxford. The line would be built under the Light Railways Act 1896 to keep down costs. The LSWR objected to the plans, claiming that the branch would disrupt its own operations at Droxford station. The Board of Trade was also doubtful that the line would comply with the requirements of the Light Railways Act as it would necessitate major earthworks, a tunnel and a large bridge or viaduct to cross the River Meon. The scheme duly failed to achieve Parliamentary approval and was abandoned.

In 1902 James Duke & Son took over the town's Abbey Mill and their trade continued to create sizeable traffic until closure of the branch. Much of Duke's traffic was handled by their own staff in the goods shed siding. The 1905 working timetable shows thirteen up trains and twelve down workings with one return goods service. It is likely that improved



A busy Botley station yard during the strawberry season of 1908. More than a dozen carts unloading fruit and at least fifteen various farm and railway workers loading the vans on the nearest of what looks like three trains in the yard.
(John Alsop Collection)

traffic revenues and savings in running costs led to the LSWR yielding to local pressure to reinstate a Sunday service with seven trains in either direction running in 1907. Following a petition from the residents of Durley, a halt was constructed near Durley Mill – about a mile from the village of the same name. The new platform, serving mill workers and the Calcot and Frogmill areas, opened to the public on 23rd December 1909. In the early years of the twentieth century there were occasional excursions to destinations including Portsmouth and Bournemouth, and infrequently to other south coast resorts. These all stopped with the outbreak of war in 1914 and were never reinstated.

The cattle dock at Bishop's Waltham was extended with three extra pens being added in 1914 subsequent to a surge in livestock traffic in the first decade of the twentieth century. The yard was always particularly busy during the cattle and sheep sales. The pens were removed following the end of local livestock sales.

World War I brought few changes to the line. Notwithstanding a decrease in passenger numbers a service was sustained through the war. There was some added traffic from 1916 when Northbrook House in Bishop's Waltham was requisitioned for use as a military hospital. In 1917 some 7,000 troops of the 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th Battalions of the Hampshire Regiment arrived and were quartered in and around the town but this brought little extra traffic to the railway as most military movements went by road to Gosport and Portsmouth. One heavily laden troop train did depart from Bishop's Waltham in late 1917/early 1918 taking troops to a camp in Scotland. This was probably the heaviest and longest train ever to use the branch.

Southern Railway

Under the terms of the Railways Act of 1921, also known as the Grouping Act, the Government set out its plan to curb the losses being made by many of the country's 120 railway companies. The aim was to move the railways away from internal competition while retaining some of the benefits which Parliament believed the country had derived from a Government-controlled railway during and after the First World War. Most of the main line railways were statutorily reorganised into one or other of four new large companies, the Great Western Railway, the London & North Eastern Railway, the London Midland & Scottish Railway and the Southern Railway. These new companies took over the lines and practices of their constituents. The LSWR was subsumed into the new Southern Railway.

Although under new overall management, the resulting changes were in fact gradual to the extent that many were not visibly evident to passengers or staff. However, in common with the other new companies, the Southern Railway soon acted to remove unnecessary duplication and expense within its territory. It was obvious to the company that passenger and goods business had deteriorated considerably and continued to decline, as road transport became more capable and convenient. Passengers travelling from Bishop's Waltham to the large towns of Winchester, Portsmouth and Southampton needed to change trains at Botley whereas cars and motorbuses could take them all the way to their destinations. Thus, in common with the general experience of railways at that time, competition from road transport led to dwindling passenger traffic such that by 1930 an average of just five passengers travelled on each of the branch's weekday trains and it was not unusual for trains to travel over the line without a single revenue-earning passenger. Durley Halt was only ever lightly used. It was consequently not unexpected that the branch passenger service was an early loss. Closure was initially considered by the Southern Railway in October 1930. The service soldiered on but a guard was no longer provided on passenger trains.

From 1st February 1931 the Sunday train service was withdrawn and evening weekday services were reduced to six trains in both directions with one down working being a mixed service. This reduction in service could not, however, save the line and on 10th October 1932 the Southern Railway announced that, as a result of falling passenger numbers, the passenger service on the Bishop's Waltham line would be withdrawn after Saturday 31st December 1932, the 23 season ticket holders having been given notice accordingly. The last day of passenger services attracted few additional visitors and the *Hampshire Observer* reported: "When we left Botley station promptly to time on Saturday evening the only passengers on board were the Stationmaster Mr. H. Wright, Messrs. W. H. Smith & Son's bookstall attendant and myself. On the return journey from Bishop's Waltham a little more interest was shown in the departure of the last train and a few more adventurous spirits joined the train to be numbered among the really last passengers to cover the journey."

The Bishop's Waltham signal box was closed in 16th December 1935 after which the signals were removed with the points being operated by hand levers. By this time, only a single Grade 1 porter was retained at Bishop's Waltham. He was responsible for dealing with the various traders, loading and unloading of wagons and all the paperwork relating to the station. Following closure to passengers Bishop's Waltham and Durley stations were closed as from 1st January 1933. The branch terminus once again came under the control of the Botley station master and the engine shed was speedily demolished but the site remained a stabling and servicing point until closed by British Railways in 1958.

Botley station remained an important loading point for strawberry traffic until about 1940, with trains taking the local produce up to London. The station still controlled an extensive system of sidings and loading bays for this seasonal traffic and for storing the special ventilated vans which transported the fruit.

At first World War II brought no modifications to services but when the bombing of Portsmouth intensified in 1940 the main Portsmouth warehouse belonging to Timothy White's (a chain of dispensing chemist and houseware stores) was destroyed and the company transferred temporarily to Swanmore House close to Bishop's Waltham. It operated there for 3½ years during which period a large volume of the company's stock was handled on the branch with parcels and small goods being dealt with at Bishop's Waltham and large goods at Botley.

Later in the war, the Royal Engineers commandeered Hazleholt Park, a large Georgian house and parklands to the north east of Bishop's Waltham. A sizeable store was set up there and an extensive assortment of military goods was transported in by rail to Bishop's Waltham. At its peak, this amounted to one train a day carrying goods such as Dannert wire (coils of barbed or razor wire), pickets and steel hawsers, all assumed to have been intended for the home defence following the Dunkirk evacuation. Everything incoming to Bishop's Waltham terminus was handled by military personnel who took over the station master's office and established a REME workshop at the rear of the yard. By 1944 the Royal Engineers had gone and the house was taken over by American servicemen and a fuel storage depot was established in the park as part of the build-up to the invasion of Europe. Great amounts of petrol, aviation fuel and lubricants came in by rail, typically in 50-gallon drums and often necessitating up to two trains a day. The management of this bulky traffic was eased by the American Military who enlarged the area of hard standing in the yard by infilling part of the pond. The store was dismantled after D-Day but the branch still had a part to play in the war effort, becoming a long siding for the storage of empty tank wagons. During this period all goods traffic normally handled at Bishop's Waltham was transferred to the yard at Botley.

In later years (possibly during World War II) a prefabricated grain store was erected at the south end of the goods shed at Bishop's Waltham. After the war branch life resumed its customary pattern with the return of the daily goods train.

Nationalisation

After the war, the four major UK railway companies were nationalised under the terms of the Transport Act 1947. On 1st January 1948 the Southern Railway was subsumed into a single national corporation, British Railways, at first under the overall administration of the British Transport Commission and later under the British Railways Board. However, apart from the Southern Railway becoming essentially the Southern Region of British Railways, the average passenger, freight user or employee on the lines still operating would have noticed no real immediate transformation. Certainly the Bishop's Waltham branch carried on pretty much unchanged – except that, in September 1948 the short private siding, originally provided for the brewery but by then being little used, was lifted. Although goods traffic began to decline after World War II the branch still handled considerable coal and mill traffic.

Further decline and closure

Since 1933 enthusiasts' specials had been the only passenger trains to reach Bishop's Waltham. Indeed the branch became quite popular for such excursions. With the popularity of rail enthusiasts' excursions growing in the 1950s the branch once again handled occasional passenger services. In 1952 the Railway Correspondence and Travel Society organised a railtour that covered just the Bishop's Waltham branch. This traversed the branch in two former LSWR coaches drawn by Drummond C14 Class 'Potato Can' 0-4-0T No 30589. On 3rd May 1953 the Stephenson Locomotive Society railtour from Gosport got to the terminus with the aid of M7 Class 0-4-4T No.30110 with two ex-LSWR coaches in front and two behind before departing to Havant. The last railtour to visit Bishop's Waltham was the Branch Line Society's 'Portsmouth Area' railtour on 7th March 1959 with M7 Class 0-4-4T No.30111 and two South Eastern & Chatham Railway coaches.

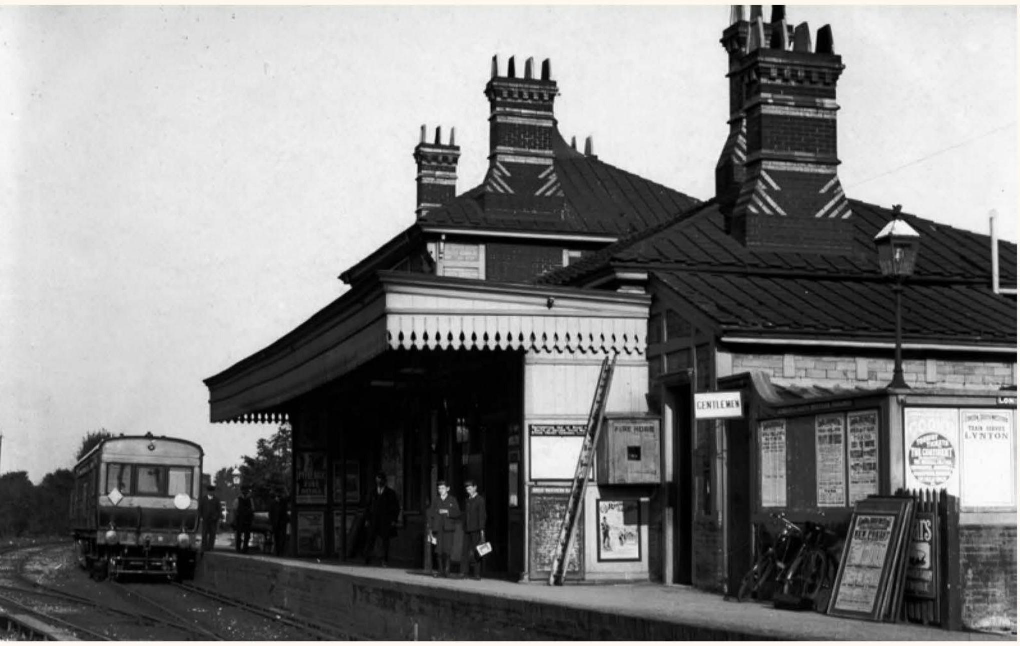
Seasonal sugar beet traffic aside, a general and significant decline in goods traffic continued. Farm traffic diminished as many farms moved over to road haulage. It was clear that the branch was now living on borrowed time. The remaining goods services became ever less frequent and regular. Nevertheless a pick-up goods ran over the line from Chichester to Horsham, returning on the Arundel line, and freight trains ran a service three times a week. Notwithstanding the fact that goods traffic handled in the first four months of 1962 topped that for the whole of 1961, goods services finally ended 'on and from' 30th April 1962. As freight trains did not run on the branch on Saturdays or Sundays, the last revenue-earning trip was actually on Friday 27th April 1962. As with the closure to passengers just over 30 years earlier, the last train almost passed unnoticed with only a handful of enthusiasts to see the passing of the branch on a cold and damp day. The last train departed Bishop's Waltham at 1.00pm accompanied by a fusillade of detonators. The following week a special train went up the branch to collect any wagons still *in situ*.

Locomotives

Early in its life the Bishop's Waltham branch featured in an interesting experiment in alternative forms of railway transport. From the first days of steam railways engineers had sought to avoid the expense of running steam locomotives and passenger carriages on lightly used lines. The same imperative imposed itself when the companies faced competition from urban electric tramways. The steam railcar, ie either a steam powered bogie and boiler enclosed in a rigid body or an articulated engine unit and carriage with the steam boiler left open, could run in either direct without the need to be turned, or for a locomotive to run round its train, as it had a driving position at either end. This saved time and track. The idea was to produce small, self-contained and economical units for use on lightly loaded services or relatively frequent shuttle services. The concept was sound enough but the practicalities were not. The units were often underpowered, lacked the ability to cope at busy times like market days or public holidays, were hot and noisy to travel in and the ride was poor, particularly on the articulated types. Additionally there was the problem of maintaining the units in steam locomotive environments.

Most of the major railway companies experimented with various forms of steam railmotor and three just managed to survive into BR ownership. Dugald Drummond, Locomotive Engineer of the London & South Western Railway, had two railcars constructed. The first two LSWR rail-motors had been built jointly with the London,

Bishop's Waltham station with the LSWR railmotor at the platform. Plenty of clutter, excursion boards advertising trips to the New Forest and the all-important gentlemen's urinal. This time there are people in the picture – although the staff seem to outnumber the passengers (I'm guessing, on the basis of their headgear, that the two boys nearest the camera are also station lads). (John Alsop Collection)



Brighton & South Coast Railway (LBSCR). Numbered 1 and 2, they were vertical-boilered and, as built, had a verandah platform at the non-powered end. They were soon rebuilt with horizontal boilers and enclosed ends but, as with many early railmotors, were ungainly machines. They operated in the Portsmouth area. In 1903 the LSWR ordered two further railmotors of its own. Nicknamed 'Tin Tabernacles', their engine portions were enclosed in a hideous steel box with two small portholes for the driver to peer through. The cab at the non-powered end was, however, to a much neater and more practical design. With the engine portions built at Nine Elms and the carriage portions at Eastleigh, this pair were also numbered 1 and 2 and designated Class H12. These latter LSWR machines, consisted of a small 0-4-0 type locomotive rigid-coupled to a single carriage. Having been tried on the Basingstoke & Alton Light Railway they were found to be unsuitable because of grumbles about insufficient accommodation and poor ventilation and were withdrawn in August 1904. In a clear sign of its priorities, the LSWR stated on 5th November 1904 that the railmotors which had been taken off the Basingstoke & Alton Light Railway were to be transferred to the Bishop's Waltham line. No.1 came to the Bishop's Waltham branch in November that year allegedly to improve the passenger service. It is probable that the low cost of halts for railmotors, which were able to set passengers down at ground level, contributed to the opening of the Durley Halt in 1909. Most railmotors were eventually replaced by steam locomotives permanently coupled to carriages and working on the push and pull system. The Bishop's Waltham example was no exception as its railmotors were withdrawn c1915 and replaced by conventional light standard tank engines.

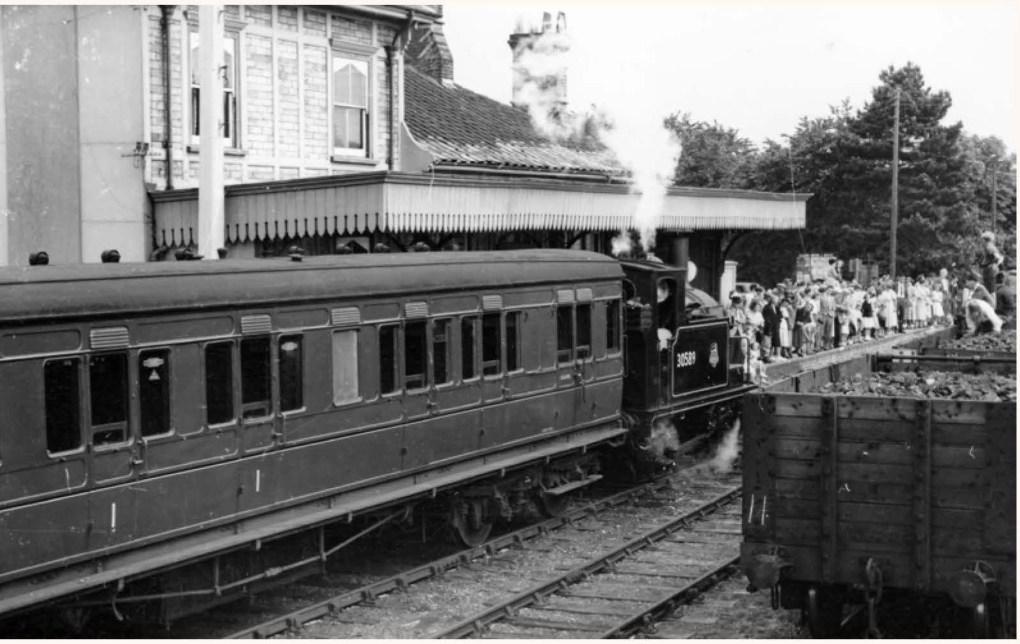
At the end of its life the branch featured in one of the last flings of steam locomotive design when it became the haunt of Ivatt tank locomotives, a class of light mixed traffic steam locomotives introduced by the London Midland & Scottish Railway in 1946, two years before nationalisation. Henry George Ivatt, the company's last Chief Mechanical Engineer, introduced two new lightweight designs for cross-country and branch line working. The tender engine became the '46400' Class and the tank engine version became the '41200' Class. Noting that the Great Western Railway '45XX' and '4575' Classes of 2-6-2T had been successful, Ivatt designed the new engine type incorporating the labour-saving devices of self-emptying ashpans and rocking grates. The side tanks had a capacity of 1,350 gallons, and the bunker, which was sloped inwards to give a clear view to the rear, had a ladder giving access to the coal space, a feature directly influenced by American practice. Many of these engines were allocated originally or latterly to the Southern Region. On the Southern they worked in various locations on all three divisions, from East Kent to the former LSWR lines in Devon and Cornwall.

The last train up the Bishop's Waltham branch was hauled by Ivatt Class 2MT 2-6-2T No.41328 which had been transferred to Eastleigh from Southport in September 1961 and remained there until withdrawal in December 1964. The locomotive was converted to the proverbial razor blades at Cashmore's, Newport, in December 1964.

Remains

When the branch freight service ended in 1962 there was some thought that the Hampshire Narrow Gauge Railway might step in with a 2ft gauge line but this did not materialise. Shortly before the track was lifted the Hampshire Narrow Gauge Society did indeed look at the possibility of laying a 2ft gauge line along the track bed from Maddoxford on the outskirts of Botley to Bishop's Waltham where a new station would be built to the south of the level crossing. These plans persisted till 1964 but eventually it lost interest and the proposal was forgotten.

In 1952 the Railway Correspondence & Travel Society organised a railtour that covered just the Bishop's Waltham branch. This traversed the branch in two former LSWR coaches drawn by Drummond C14 Class 0-4-0T No.30589 – here seen at Bishop's Waltham (probably drawing back its train prior to running round judging by the crowds on the platform and on the adjacent coal wagons! (R. K. Blencowe)



Bishop's Waltham station was demolished in 1965 to make way for road improvements. A road was built bypassing the town centre, following the course of the goods sidings north of the station. The actual station site is occupied by a traffic roundabout, appropriately known as the Old Station Roundabout, located at the junction of the B2177 and the B3035 towards Corhampton. A small piece of the line and a pair of level crossing gates have been preserved next to the roundabout.

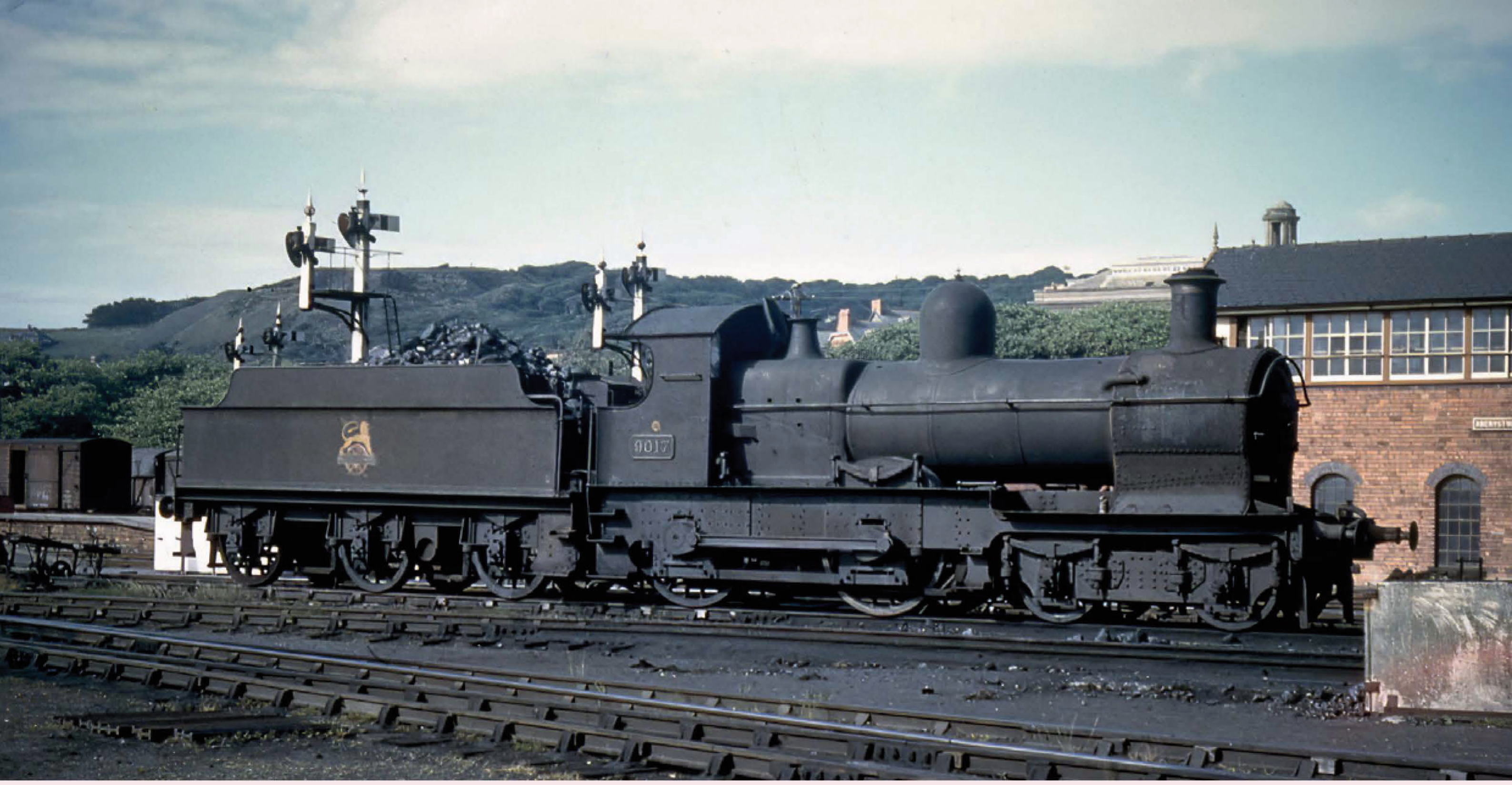
Much of the track bed of the branch is still traceable and short section to the south of Bishop's Waltham is now a public footpath. A 1km section is now a permissive footpath and forms part of the King's Way and Pilgrims Trail. Some track still exists as a long siding at the southernmost end of the line. This is used by Foster Yeoman who operate an aggregate railhead depot and coated roadstone plant in the former Botley station goods yard. Two iron overbridges either side of Durley Halt are extant.

Botley station itself remains operative. Although it experienced a decline in traffic from 1950 onwards, passenger numbers picked up again in the 1990s when direct services to London were re-introduced for the first time since before World War II. The line between Portsmouth and Eastleigh was electrified, with 750 V dc third rail and electric services commenced in May 1990. The station and route was closed due to a landslip between 31st January and 15th March 2014. The station was renovated in summer 2015 when repainting was carried out, the platforms were resurfaced and new lighting and barriers were installed.

Conclusions

When all is said and done, the Botley to Bishop's Waltham branch was 3¾ miles of 'might have been.' It might have been a link to the Petersfield Railway and so to the LSWR Portsmouth Direct line. It might have been a link, via Winchester, in an alternative route from London to Southampton. It might have been extended to Droxford to connect with the Meon Valley line. What it actually became was a means of opening up the produce of the small town of Bishop's Waltham to the increasing markets of southern England and London. Born with hope and confidence and the promise of a rapid development in traffic, it actually struggled through various adversities which crippled the company, leaving it with a burden of debts that culminated in the inevitable sell-out. There is no doubt that the decline and ultimate failure of the town's Clay Company played a significant part in impeding the growth of traffic in the critical early years of the railway's life.

Nevertheless the branch served passengers for 70 years until the inevitable rise of the internal combustion engine and the inherent flexibility of road lorries and buses supplanted it. It contributed to the movement of the area's freight for very nearly another 30 years before succumbing to the same enemy. Having been the test bed for some early experiments in motive power it witnessed, in its final days, some of the most modern steam locomotive power in the land. Throughout its admittedly rather sparse operation it also provided a memorial to those small town Victorian men of vision who pushed it through.



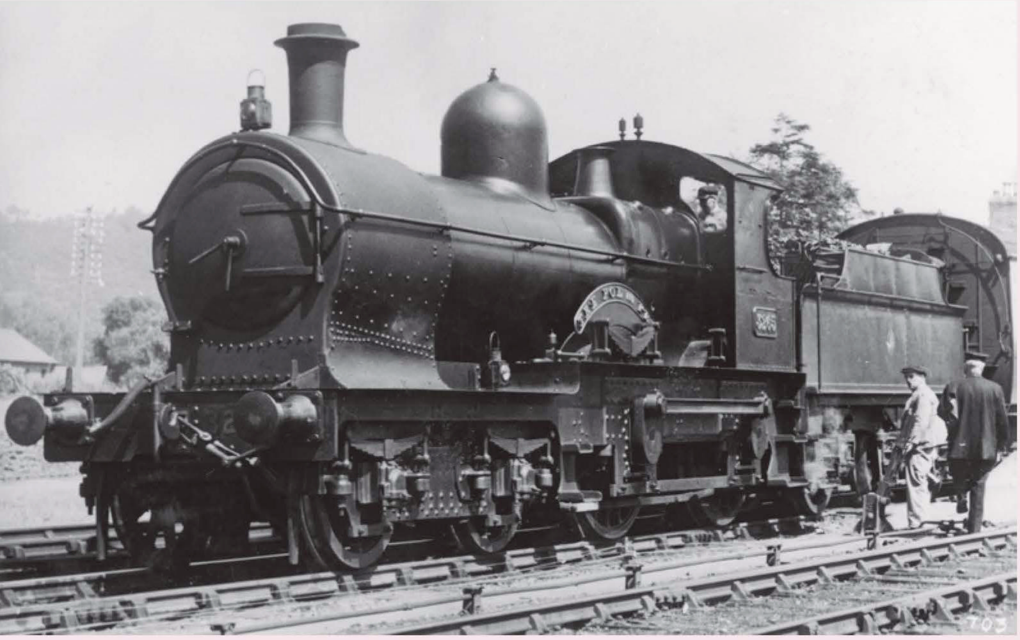
By the mid to late 1950s the remaining ‘Earls’ in traffic were low on the list of priorities when it came to cleaning unless they were being prepared for a special duty. With its tender carrying some choice coal, No.9017 stands at the throat of Aberystwyth station with the station’s large signal box as a backcloth. By this time the yellow route disc was placed immediately above the cabside numberplates. During No.9017’s 22-year working life it always carried a boiler without top feed. Also visible is the outward curve of the cab side sheets to match the width of the tender. (Colour-Rail.com 320198)

No.9017 A REMARKABLE SURVIVOR

ANDREW WILSON looks at the life and times of GWR ‘Earl’ 4-4-0 No.3217/9017.

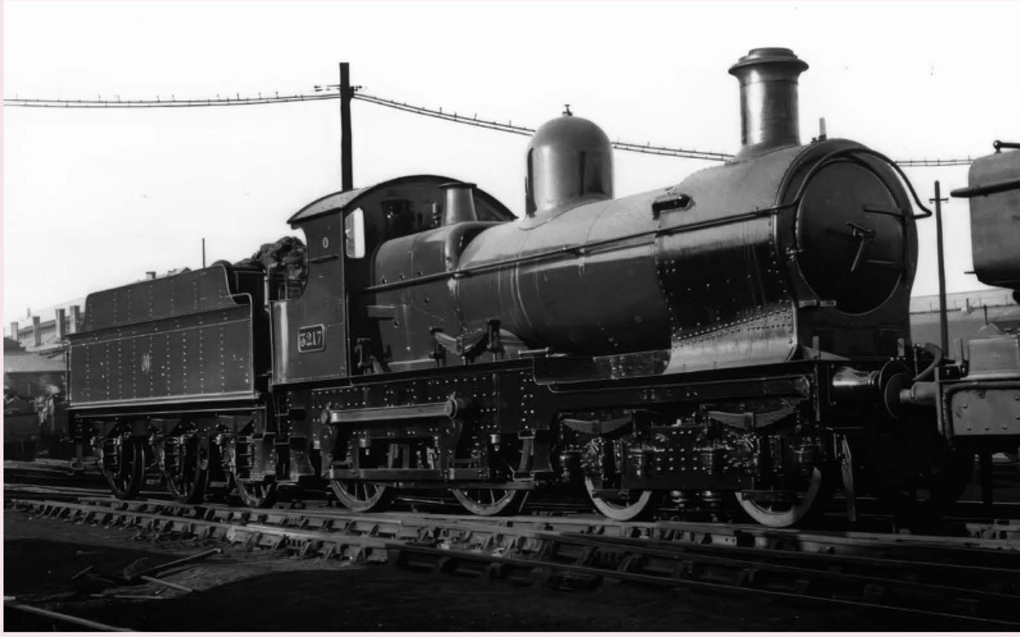
It wasn’t until a family summer holiday high in the mountains above Talsarnau that I discovered the delights of the Cambrian Coast lines radiating from Machynlleth. Unfortunately, by 1962 the last of the ex-Great Western Railway ‘Earl’ or ‘Dukedog’ Class 4-4-0s had been withdrawn and scrapped apart from No.9017, but there were still the ‘Manors’, ‘43XX/63XX’ and ‘2251’ Classes as well as the Standard ‘75000’, ‘78000’ and ‘82000’ Classes hard at work soon to be followed by the ‘80000s’. After withdrawal No.9017 had been stored at Oswestry courtesy of Oliver Veltom, the Oswestry District Traffic Superintendent, while a public appeal fronted by Peter Summers and Tom Gomm set about raising the £1,549 to buy the 4-4-0 with a home waiting on the Bluebell Railway in Sussex. With the news that No. 9017 has returned to Aberystwyth for display in the Vale of Rheidol Railway’s museum housed in the ex-GWR 1938 main line shed, the time is right to reassess the life and times of this remarkable survivor.

The ‘32XXs’ or rebuilt ‘Bulldogs’ with ‘Duke’-type boilers, more commonly known as ‘Earls’ or ‘Dukedogs’, were combination of Dean and Churchward practice resurrected by Collett as a cost effective way to ease the GWR’s shortage of medium power locomotives capable of working over ‘yellow’ classification routes such as the ex-Cambrian main line. Although almost a third of GWR’s lines were ‘yellow’ or uncoloured. some were much harder to work than others and the Cambrian line between Welshpool, Machynlleth, Aberystwyth and Pwllheli was one such. The under-engineered bridges and viaducts west of Welshpool effectively barred the ‘’blue’ category Churchward ‘43XX’ 2-6-0s and Dean/Churchward ‘Bulldog’ 4-4-0s which were the mainstay of such routes elsewhere.



‘Duke’ 4-4-0 No.3265 *Tre Pol and Pen* was withdrawn in December 1929 and rebuilt with parts of the original, a spare ‘Duke’ boiler and the frames of a ‘Bulldog’ 4-4-0 and in this form became the prototype for the ‘32XX’ (‘Earl’) Class. It was withdrawn as such at the end of 1949. (Pendragon Collection)

Complicating matters, the 1930s were a period of severe financial restraint and the recycling of boilers and frames, which were not life expired, was both economical and creative. In 1930 ‘Duke’ Class 4-4-0 No.3265 *Tre Pol and Pen,* which had been withdrawn in December 1929, was rebuilt at Swindon using the straight frames of ‘Bulldog’ No.3365 *Charles Grey Mott*. The hybrid emerged from Swindon Works in February 1930 and entered traffic at Didcot and following precedent it should have retained the number 3365. In July the



The newly rebuilt No.3217 was officially completed at Swindon Works on 4th March 1938 and soon after this date the new 'Earl' is pictured in immaculate condition showing off its mid-chrome green livery and 'shirt button' insignia on the reconditioned 3,500-gallon tender. The lime stains below the dome show that the boiler has been steamed while the tender is well coaled. An interesting feature of the cabs on the 'Earls' was the curve on the trailing edge to match the width to that of the tender in an attempt to reduce the draught and keep down swirling coal dust. As was the way with steam locomotives, once at work from Aberystwyth shed No.3217 would quickly lose its pristine appearance. (Great Western Trust)

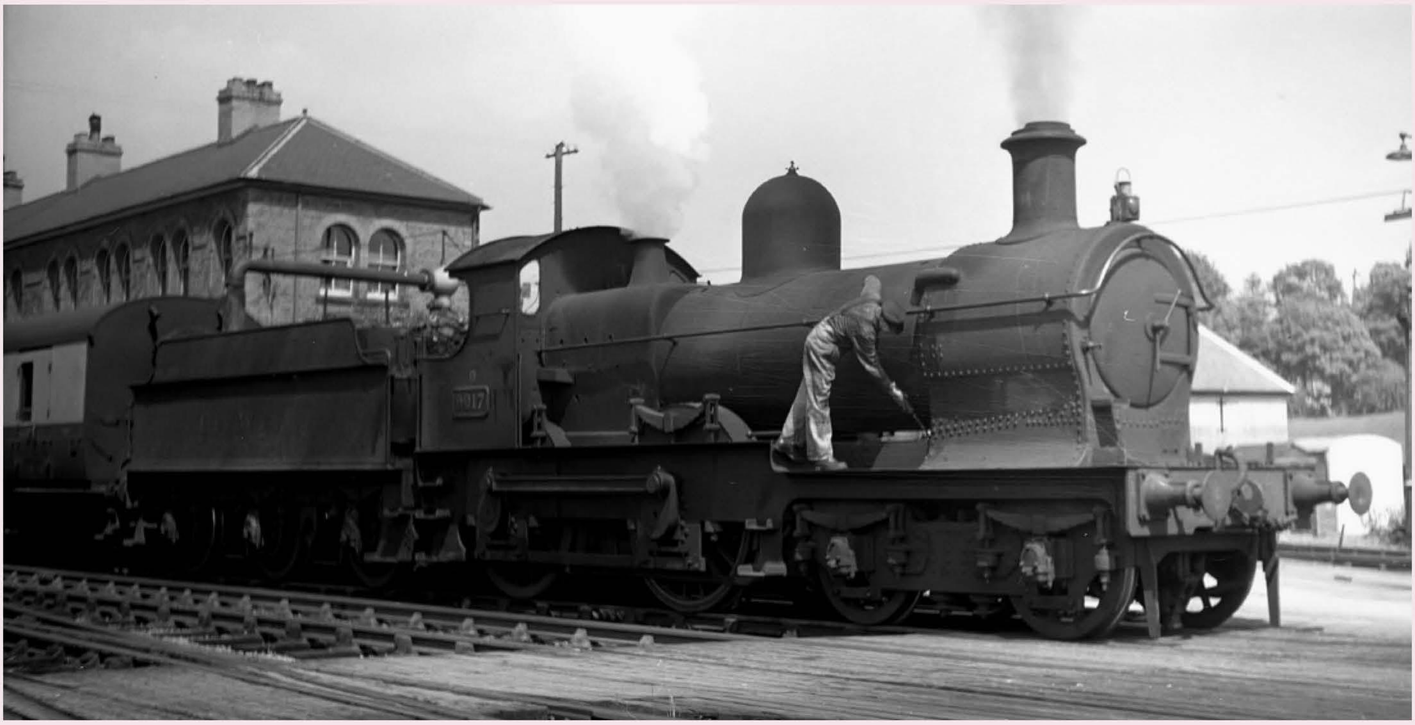
rebuild was moved to Oswestry where it was regarded as a lifeline with Swindon being asked for more of the same. In practice *Tre Pol and Pen* became the prototype of the '32XX' Class, albeit with 3ft 2in bogie wheels instead of the 3ft 8in fitted to the rebuilds. With straight frames and the boiler pitched at 7ft 5in compared with the 7ft 1¾in of the 'Dukes', No.3265 looked slightly more modern. The 'Dukes' had been put into traffic between 1895 and 1899 while the 'Bulldogs' were built between 1899 and 1910, so the 'Earls' were hardly a new design.

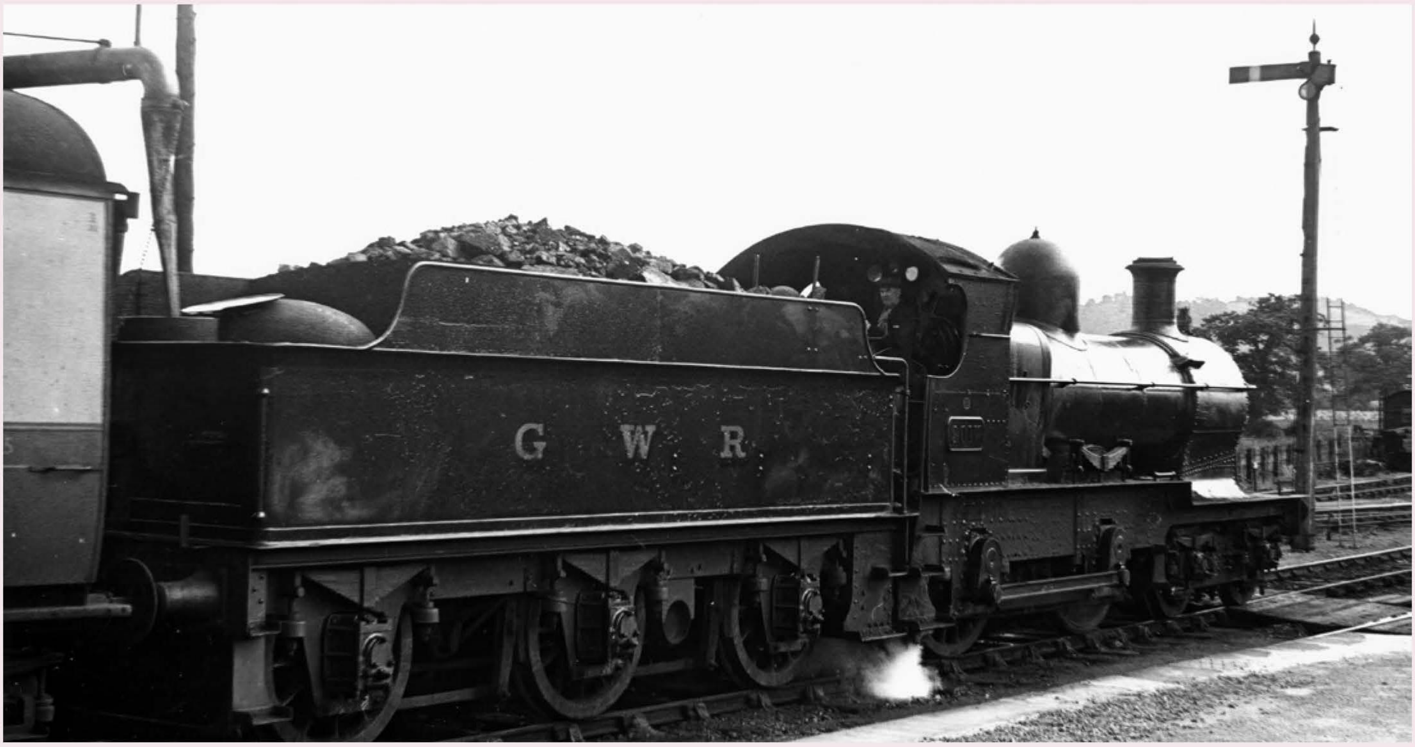
The 'Earls' were modestly superheated with a single row superheater giving 81.2sq ft of heating and a relatively modest grate area of 17sq ft compared with the 20.8sq ft of a Dean 'Achilles' Single or the 21.45sq ft of a 'Bulldog'. Both classes had their boilers pressed to 180psi while 18in by 26in cylinders, 8in piston valves with outside admission valves and 5ft 8in coupled wheels gave a nominal tractive effort at 85% boiler pressure of 18,955ls. The 'Earls' were heavier than the 'Dukes' with the engine tipping the scales at 49tons compared with the 46tons of the older design. The driving axle carried four axleboxes and four cranks, two for the inside big ends and two for the outside coupling rods, and was loaded to 15tons 8cwt, one hundredweight more than a 'Duke'. The trailing axle was loaded to 15tons, 1 ton 17cwt heavier. This still placed the class comfortably within the GWR's B, 'yellow', power classification and later British Railways 2P power class. Automatic Train Control was fitted as standard.

Before any more of the 'Bulldogs' were rebuilt with 'Duke' boilers, the GWR indulged in some subterfuge deciding the rebuilds should be termed new build. In December 1935 Stanley Baldwin's government enacted 'The Railways (Agreement) Act' which provided guaranteed loans to the 'Big Four' railway companies at low rates of interest for new construction. With a share of the £26,500,000 at stake, it was necessary to regard the reboilered 'Bulldogs' as new locomotives before any more were turned out of Swindon Works.

The next of the '32XX' class to appear in April 1936 was No.3201 *St. Michael,* built to Lot 315. It was intended that *Tre Pol and Pen* should be renumbered as No.3200 but that never

Despite the war in Europe being over for thirteen months this 22nd June 1946 photograph of No.3217 at Oswestry is to all intents and purposes pure wartime Great Western and finds the driver oiling the inside motion before departing in charge of a local all-stations working. The GWR legend can just be made out on the tender as the fireman oversees the topping up of the water tank. It would be another two months before this locomotive became No.9017 on 29th August to free the 3200 number up for use on the new Collett '2251' Class 0-6-0s. Now eleven years old, the outside framed 4-4-0 shows its antecedents dating back to the introduction of the Dean 'Dukes' in 1895. (Author's Collection)





Although carrying GWR wartime plain black livery, this photograph of what is now No.9017 was taken in early British Railways days. Both engine and tender have received the attention of the Aberystwyth cleaners and while the boiler and dome look in excellent condition, the same cannot be said for the tender and cab side sheets. This is probably a reflection of the wartime repaint in September 1944 at Wolverhampton Stafford Road Works. It would not be until January 1951 when No.9017 would receive a full repaint into British Railways livery with the large version of the 'cycling lion' on the tender. The storm sheet can be seen neatly stowed on the cab roof. (H. C. Casserley)

happened, so the second of the class completed in May became No.3200. At first it seemed the '32XXs' would to carry the names of the 'Dukes' they replaced and No.3201 carried *St. Michael* nameplates for a short time but a policy decision was to see the class named after some of the middle rank of British peers to add credence to the claim these were new locomotives. Names were allotted to the first twenty with No.3217 to be *Earl of Berkeley.* Only thirteen names were carried as the chosen peers took umbrage at their titles being carried by Victorian-looking locomotives. It seems that matters came to a head when Stanley Baldwin, three times Prime Minister and a Great Western director, was raised to the peerage as Earl Baldwin of Bewdley in July 1937. To avoid a publicity embarrassment the names carried by Nos.3200-13 were quietly removed between 25th June and 1st July 1937 and transferred to 'Castle' Class 4 6 0s with *Earl of Berkeley* carried by No.5060 and *Earl Baldwin* by No.5069.

No.3217 was completed at Swindon Works on 4th March 1938 as part of Lot 315 and cost £2,398, £202,271 at today's values, for the engine and £834, the equivalent of £70,350, for the reconditioned Churchward 3,500-gallon tender. Its frames came from 'Bulldog' No. 3425 and according to the Engine Record Card its boiler and cab from 'Duke' No 3528 *The Lizard,* but when stripped for overhaul on the Bluebell Railway these came from No.3282 so little of No.3528 appears to have been reused. Livery was unlined mid chrome green with the tender carrying the GWR's stylish Art Deco shirt button roundel. Once steam tested and run in, it was despatched to the Cambrian Division at Aberystwyth.

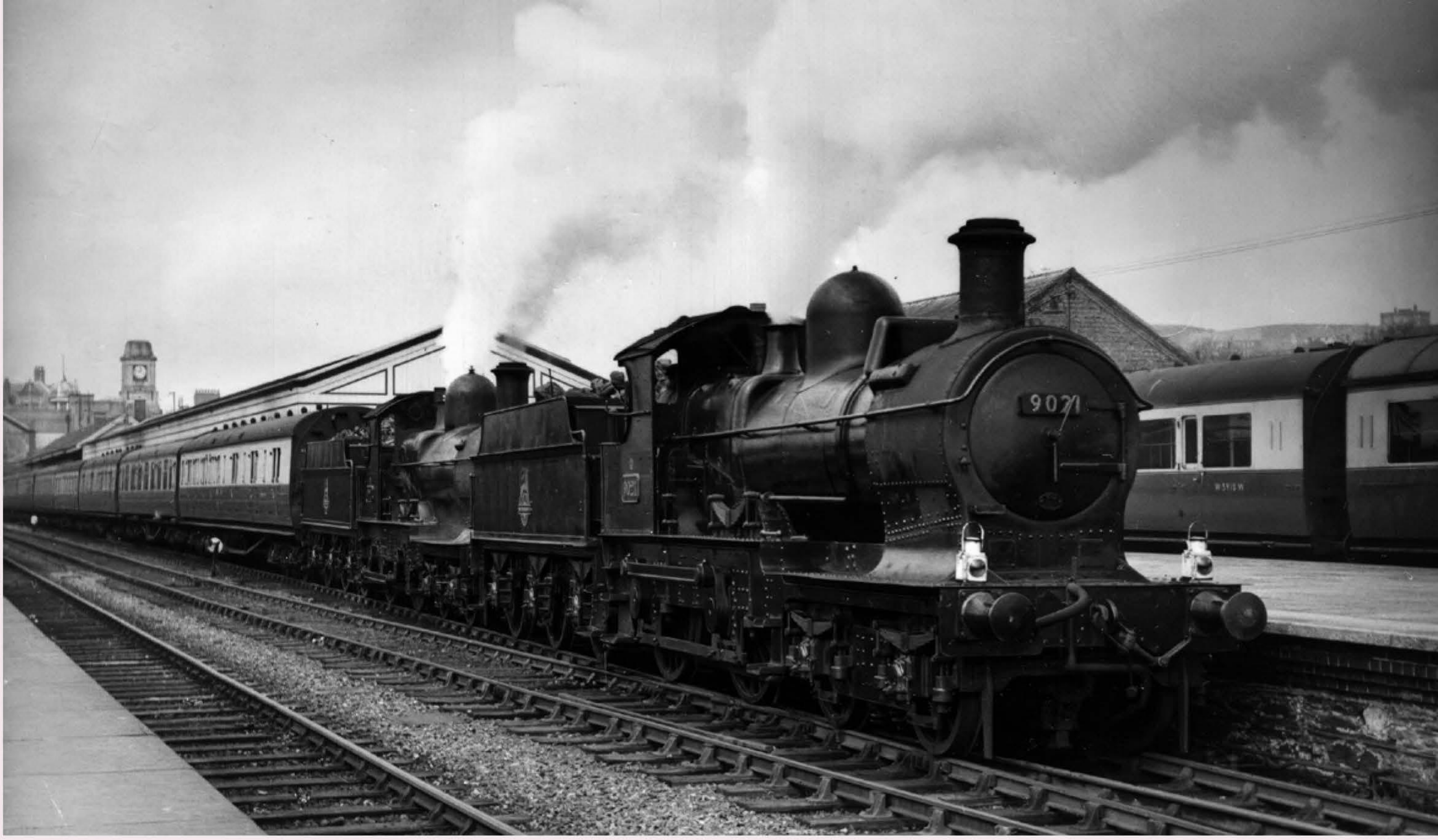
No.3217 was one of the many members of the class to spend all its working life in the Central Wales District allocated to Machynlleth and Aberystwyth in addition to the coast road sub-sheds at Portmadoc and Pwllheli along with very brief spells at Oswestry and Welshpool, often no more than a few days at a time. During No.9017's 22-year working life the only time it ventured into England beyond Shrewsbury was to visit Wolverhampton Stafford Road and Swindon for heavy works attention and a small number of railtours.

Like most of the Cambrian coast allocations the 'Earls' were used on both passenger and freight turns and were also found acting as station pilots at Aberystwyth, Machynlleth and Pwllheli. During periods of heavy summer traffic, they were used as pilots over Talerddig between Machynlleth, Newtown and Shrewsbury as well as the ex-GWR route over Garneddwen between Barmouth and Llangollen. The GWR allowed the class to take 160 tons unassisted over Talerddig. Regular timetabled trains saw the class employed on passenger balancing turns between Machynlleth and Welshpool, Welshpool to Whitchurch and Whitchurch to Aberystwyth. Coast road turns included working from Dovey Junction to Aberystwyth and Barmouth, Barmouth to Pwllheli, Portmadoc to Pwllheli and Barmouth. Although having no regular diagrams south of Aberystwyth over the ex-Manchester & Milford line to Carmarthen the class was used when motive power was at a premium.

Regular freight duties included those between Machynlleth, Welshpool and Shrewsbury. The heavy Machynlleth to Oswestry goods only came their way if there was a shortage of motive power or a pilot was needed. Both the pre-war and post-war heavy summer specials would find double-headed 'Earls' at work. As war clouds gathered in the late 1930s troop specials to the large army camps at Towyn and Tonfanau increased in number and the class could be found working these twelve to fourteen-coach trains double-headed with 'Duke' 4-4-0s, 0-6-0s and 2-6-2Ts.

By the time No.3217 had entered traffic there had been a marked improvement in the local bus services in this part of Wales. However, passenger traffic held up because roads still meandered around the estuaries while apart from that of the Dovey the railway crossed them. The introduction of heavier coaches and longer trains saw the 'Earls' and 'Dukes' hard pressed to cope especially in the summer months when holiday traffic necessitated the duplication of services.

On 23rd November 1938 No.3217 was involved in an unusual incident when a deep area of low pressure swept in from the Irish Sea bringing with it storm force winds and torrential rain. With the incoming tide reaching its peak the tracks approaching Dovey Junction were in danger of inundation. No 3217 was in charge of the 7.50am Aberystwyth to Machynlleth service. Approaching Ynyslas the driver proceeded with caution and seeing the waters rising decided to seek refuge on the highest part of the line near Trerddol Bridge. Able to neither continue towards Dovey Junction nor return to Ynyslas, the train was effectively marooned until the waters receded in early afternoon.



Two 'Earls', Nos.9021 and 9017, double-head the 12.45pm Aberystwyth to Whitchurch express on 11th April 1956, with a dynamometer car attached to the rear of the train. The 'Earls', despite improved draughting, were strictly limited to the loads they could take over the gradients to Whitchurch and this resulted in much double-heading. No.9021 is one of the class fitted with a boiler having a large top feed that radically changed the appearance of the engine. Both 4-4-0s have been beautifully turned out by the cleaners of their respective sheds, Machynlleth and Aberystwyth, for what appears to be a special occasion, hence the dynamometer car in the formation. (Pat Dalton/Author's Collection)

No.3217's first fifteen months in traffic at Aberystwyth were uneventful but as the prospect of war against Germany became a reality, mobilisation and evacuation plans were dusted off and made ready for implementation. As traffic demand fluctuated in June 1939 No.3217 was moved to Oswestry but was returned to Aberystwyth in July only to move back to Oswestry in August to help handle the evacuation trains for schoolchildren from Liverpool and Birkenhead, which were routed to Oswestry and forward to Machynlleth, Aberystwyth, Aberdovey and Penrhyndeudraeth and other coast road stations. Aberystwyth also became the destination for containers full of priceless artefacts from the British Museum destined for storage. Machynlleth shed was the only coast road depot to be provided with air raid shelters.

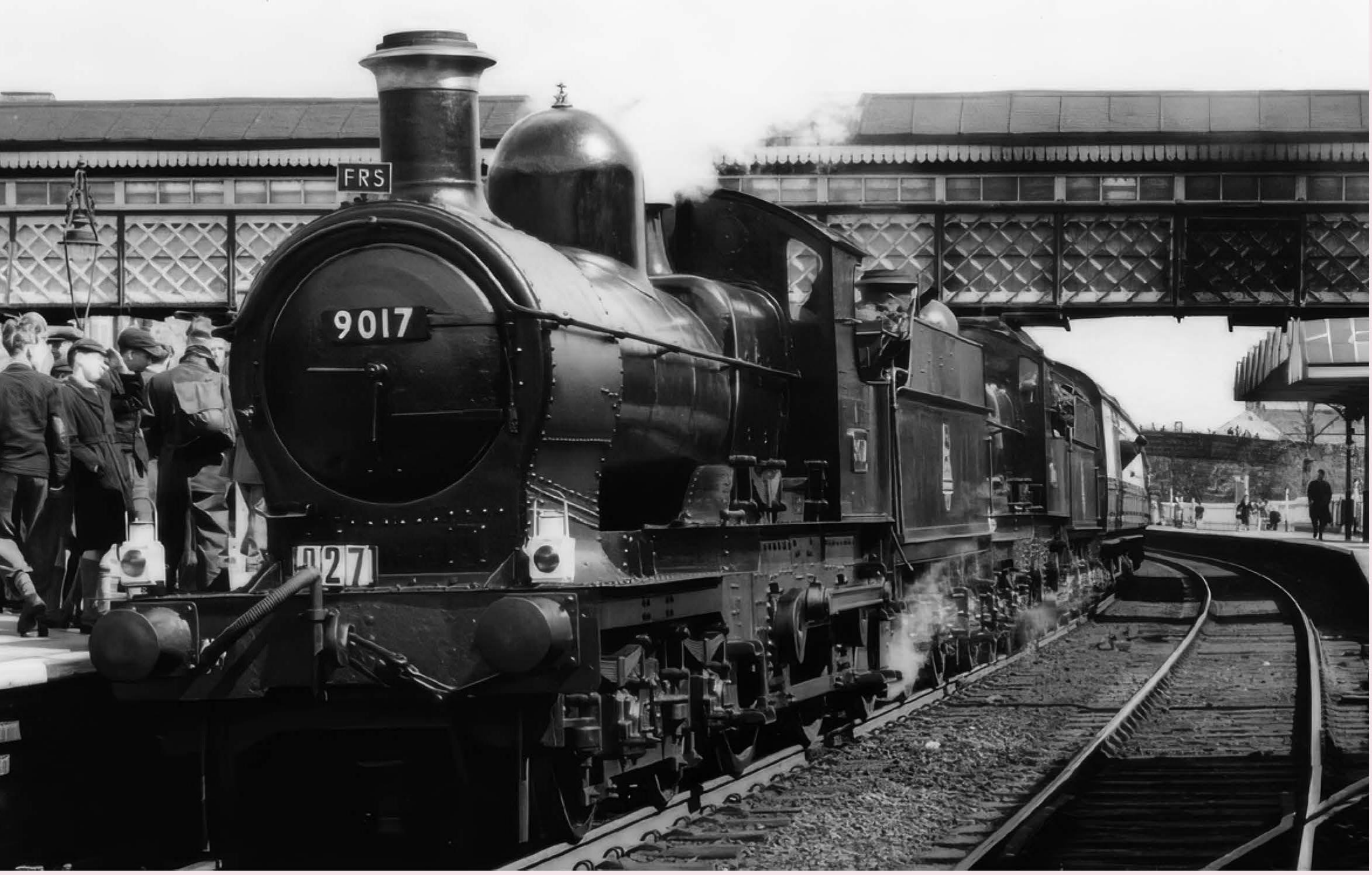
The Cambrian coast with its long sandy beaches brought about a proliferation of military bases in addition to those already at Towyn and Tonfanau. The REME base at Tonfanau required trains not only to bring in the military personnel but also trains for civilian workers from as far afield as Harlech, Dolgellau and Aberystwyth. The Royal Marines had a base at Llwyngwril while the RAF was at Towyn, Llanbedr and Penrhos, near Pwllheli. Further north at Harlech was a Royal Artillery base and the Royal Naval base HMS *Glendower* near Pwllheli. Even with this increase in military traffic the heavy summer services were well patronised. In August 1940 the 10.05am ex-Aberystwyth ran in three parts.

With the evacuation trains concentrated into the first four days of September 1939 No.3217 returned to Aberystwyth later in September only to be called back to Oswestry in October, remaining until December. Six months were then spent at Aberystwyth before moving to Machynlleth for the first time. Sent back to Aberystwyth in July, No.3217 was called into Wolverhampton Stafford Road Works on 15th August 1940 for an Intermediate repair after running 71,301 miles, representing a respectable average of 28,580 miles a year.

After spending 51 days at Stafford Road Works No.3217 returned to Aberystwyth until June 1941 when sent briefly to Machynlleth but it was back at Aberystwyth within the month. In November its was sent to Welshpool before returning to Aberystwyth in December. May 1942 brought a return to Machynlleth before being called into Oswestry Works for a Light Repair on 12th July having run an estimated 41,685 miles since leaving Stafford Road. By this date its accumulated mileage was 112,986 miles.

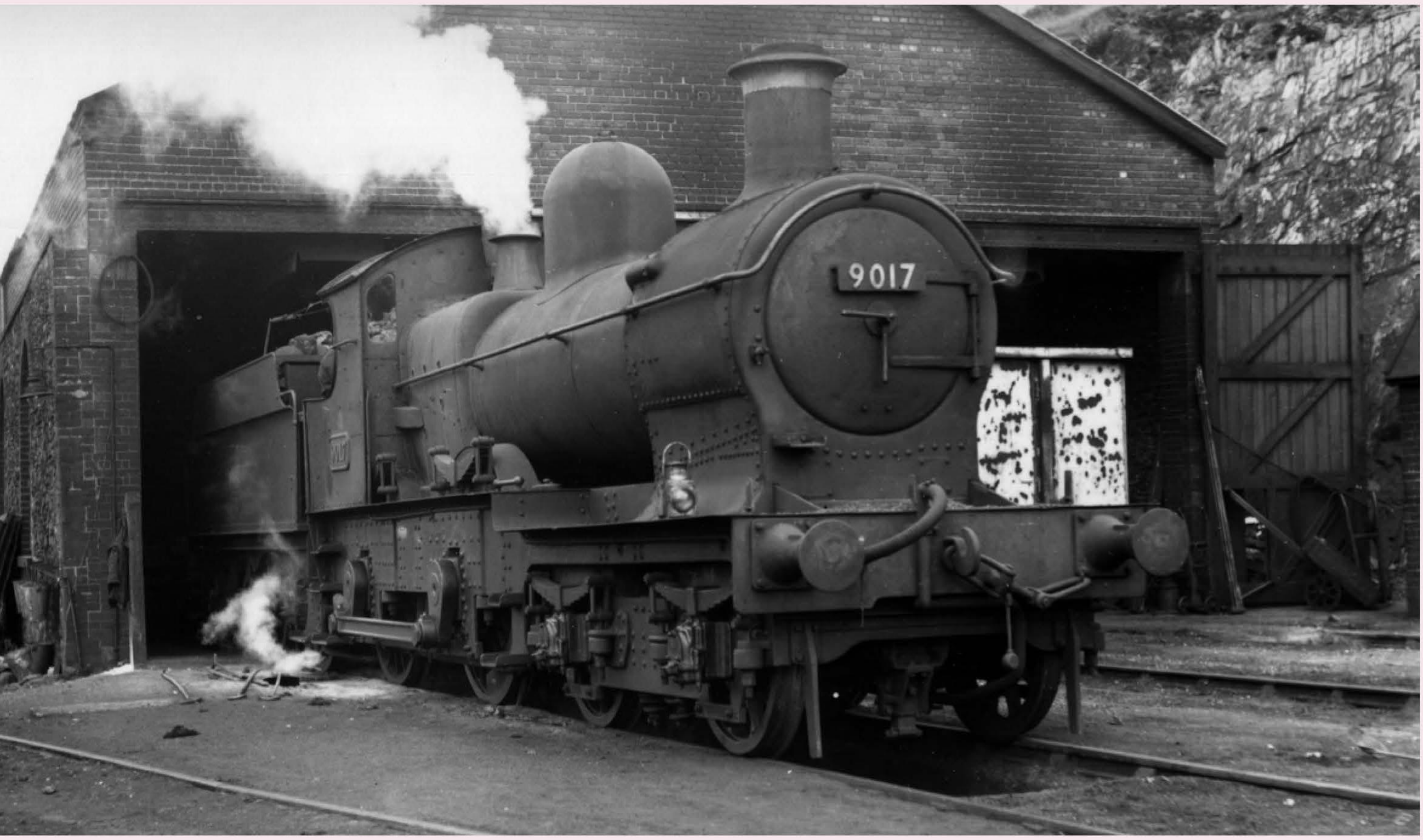
During this time one of the most important goods working of the war began to pass through the Central Wales Division, the Saltney Goods. Running from the large yards at Llandeilo Junction east of Llanelli to those at Saltney Junction to the west of Chester, these trains conveyed large quantities of live munitions and as a result were shrouded in secrecy. Three routes were used including one that ran via Carmarthen and the ex-Manchester & Milford line to Aberystwyth, Machynlleth, Talerddig, Welshpool, Oswestry and Gobowen. Classified in the working timetables as 'Through Goods Class F', it began running sometime in late 1940 to early 1941 and ceased in 1944. Initially the Central Wales Division 'yellow' route availability 4-4-0s and 0-6-0s were used but even in tandem they were not powerful enough and as a result the lines were rapidly upgraded to a 'blue' route, allowing the use of the '43XX' and 'Aberdare' 2-6-0s, the 'Bulldog' 4-4-0s and 'Manor' 4-6-0s. The knock-on effect of the appearances of these locomotives was a reduction in the mileages worked by the 'Earl' and 'Duke' 4-4-0s at Aberystwyth and Machynlleth. Further north at Penrhyndeudraeth Cooke's Explosives were also producing munitions that were moved by train.

After emerging from Oswestry Works No.3217 spent three weeks at Oswestry before returning to Machynlleth and then Aberystwyth but on 19th December 1942 was called into Wolverhampton Stafford Road Works for another Light shopping. Released back into traffic on 5th February 1943 its accumulated mileage was approaching 120,000 miles. Apart from running repairs at Oswestry No.3217 continued to work out of Machynlleth, Welshpool, Aberystwyth and Oswestry as traffic requirements demanded. During this time, it remained in as-built condition carrying boiler No.3277 and coupled to Churchward 3,500-gallon tender No.2032. By June 1944 No.3217 was stopped at Aberystwyth awaiting works attention and on 14th September was called into Wolverhampton Stafford Road Works for another Intermediate overhaul. When released back into traffic at Aberystwyth at the beginning of November it still carried



The special trains run by both the Festiniog Railway Society and the Talyllyn Railway Preservation Society in the 1950s and 1960s were guaranteed to provided unusual motive power and on 26th April 1958 the FRS special was no exception, using double-framed steam throughout. No.3440 *City of Truro* worked the train from Paddington to Ruabon and from Shrewsbury back to Paddington while Nos.9017 and 9021 took over for the runs through the Dee Valley to Cardigan Bay and the return over Talerddig. Here Nos.9017 and 9021, both having been turned out in spotless external condition, have come on at Ruabon and are awaiting the 'right away'. (R. J. Leonard)

On Tuesday 2nd August 1960 No.9017 raises steam in front of Machynlleth's straight shed, which combined both a two road and a three-road shed, the south western building have three roads and this, the north eastern end, two roads. Now in its last months in traffic No.9017 is, livery apart, still very much as built. The top lamp bracket remains on the top of the smokebox while no shedplate is carried. Photographic evidence show No.9017 with an 89C shedplate up to the time it started to be stored over winter and so it appears the plate was removed and never put back.
(Peter Groom/Author's Collection)



boiler No 3277 and remained coupled to tender No.2032. By December it had moved back to Machynlleth by which time it was coupled to Churchward 3,500-gallon tender No.1684 which had been built for unnamed 'Bulldog' No.3440. By this time the mid-chrome green livery had been replaced by a coat of plain wartime black.

No.3217 then worked for a further 43 months before receiving its first General overhaul at Wolverhampton Stafford Road Works between 7th August and 2nd October 1947. On 29th August 1946 whilst allocated to Portmadoc it was renumbered as No.9017 to make its original number available for a new '2251' Class 0-6-0. At this time the normal shopping period of many of the Central Wales Division locomotives was 36 months or 70,000-80,000 miles. However, No.3217/9017 had only run 54,515 miles between November 1944 and August 1947, significantly less than many other members of the class such Nos.3203/9003 and 3214/9014 engaged on similar work in the same Division. Yet despite being regarded as one of the better 'Earls' this disparity in mileages remained with it until withdrawn on 25th October 1960.

Central Wales District – Diagrammed Turns for '9XXX' Engines

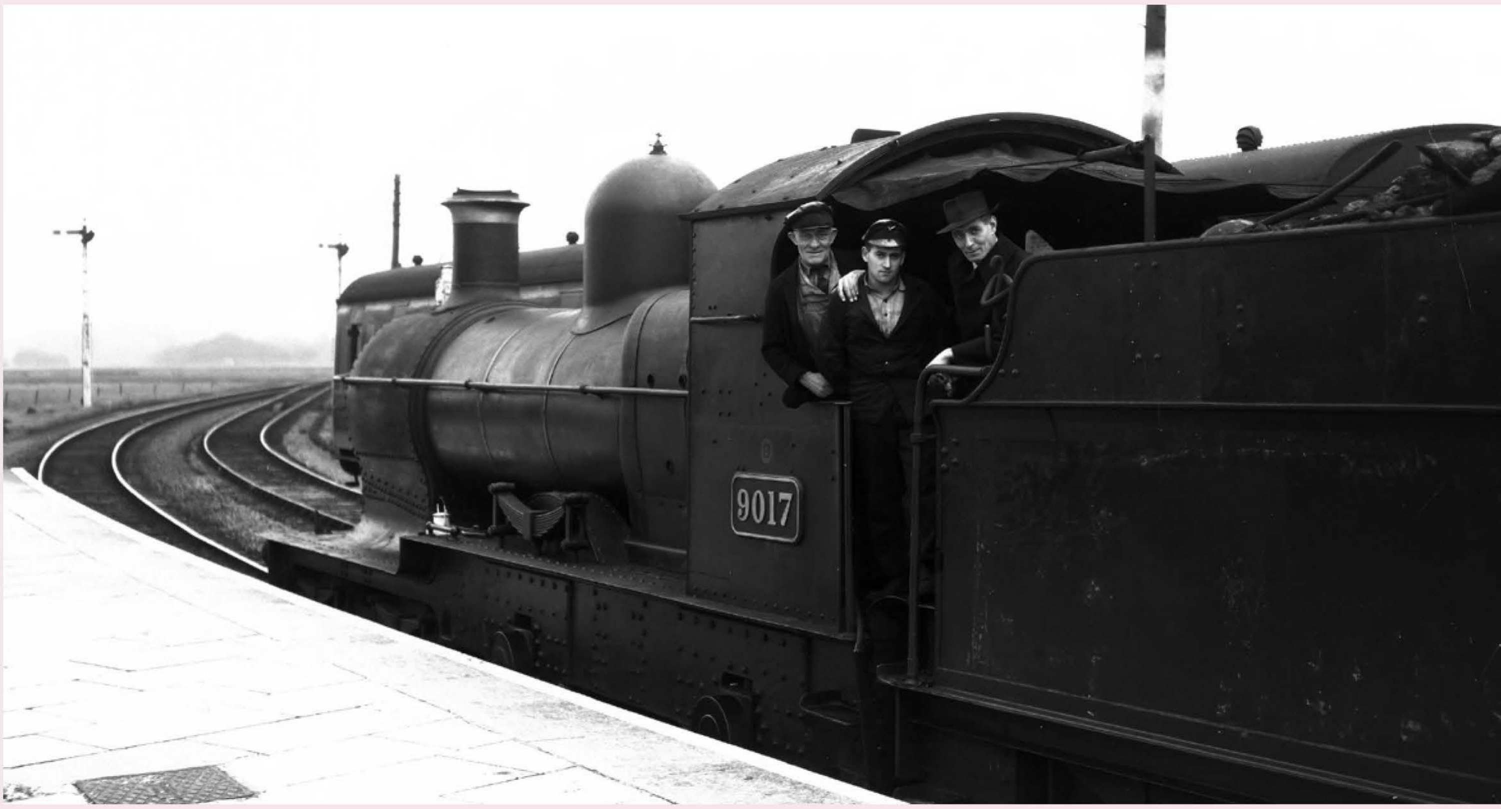
6.35am	Passenger	Machynlleth to Welshpool
10.20am	Passenger	Welshpool to Whitchurch
2.05pm	Passenger	Whitchurch to Welshpool
4.35pm	Passenger	Welshpool to Aberystwyth
8.20am	Passenger	Dovey Junction to Aberystwyth
12.00 noon	Passenger	Aberystwyth to Welshpool
6.20pm	Freight	Welshpool to Shrewsbury
11.35pm	Freight	Shrewsbury to Welshpool
2.10am	Freight	Welshpool to Machynlleth
3.45pm	Passenger	Barmouth to Pwllheli
10.25am	Passenger	Pwllheli to Barmouth
12.20pm	Passenger	Barmouth to Dovey junction
3.35pm	Passenger	Machynlleth to Barmouth
5.55pm	Passenger	Barmouth to Pwllheli
8.15pm	Passenger	Pwllheli to Portmadoc
4.50pm	Passenger	Pwllheli to Machynlleth

Source: *Railway World April 1953*

Returning once more to Aberystwyth on 2nd October 1947 carrying its final GWR livery, No.9017 was in charge of the last down GWR train out of Oswestry to Llanidloes on 21st December 1947. During its 9¾ years in traffic its accumulated mileage stood at around 224,000 miles, an average of 22,974 miles a year. During this relatively short time it had moved shed it no fewer than 49 times, once every 2½ months. However, unlike previously its next 3¼ years were all spent at Aberystwyth and included a Light Casual repair at Oswestry Works in January 1950. Credited with running 78,810 miles at an average of 24,250 miles a year, No.9017 achieved the expected three years between General overhauls and met the 70-80,000 mile target. Now due for a General repair it was called into Swindon on 5th January 1951 and entered the works two weeks later. The General lasted for six weeks during which boiler No.3232 was fitted but Churchward 3,500-gallon tender No.1684 was retained. Its was repainted into British Railways black livery with the large version of the 'cycling lion' totem on the tender.

The period between nationalisation and the General repair at Swindon Works was to be No.9017's most productive in terms of availability and mileage worked. However, at least three of the Churchward '4575' Class 2-6-2Ts, Nos.4575, 5541 and 5570, allocated to Machynlleth and Aberystwyth during the same period, ran higher mileages. No.4575 was credited with 82,367 at an annual average of 27,456 miles, No.5541 86,676 at 26,670 a year and No.5570 63,802 miles at 25,521 miles a year.

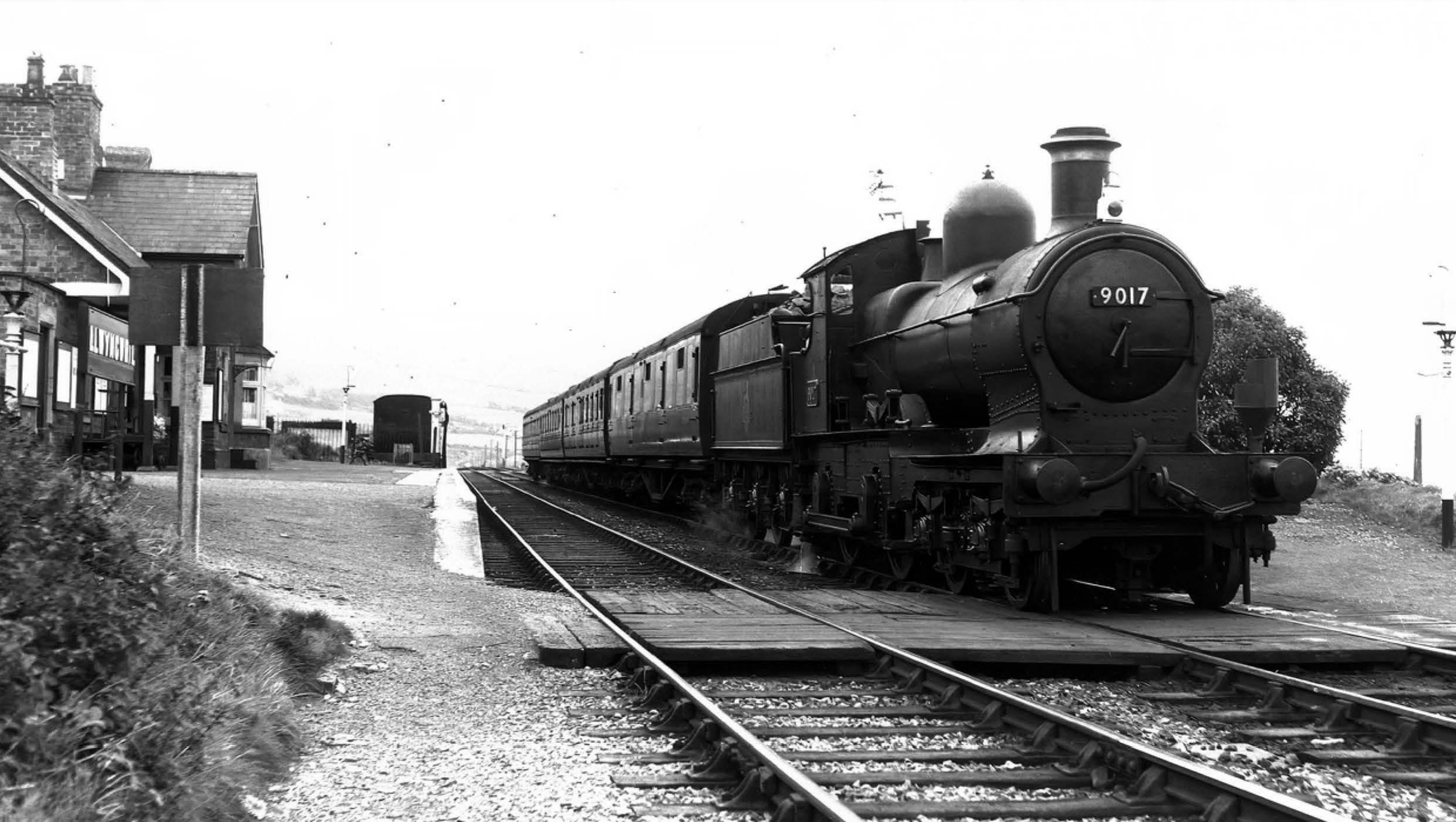
Released back to traffic from Aberystwyth in April 1951, No.9017's next Heavy General was at Wolverhampton Stafford Road in August 1955. Reckoned to have run 76,525 miles at 17,750 miles a year, this was a significant decrease despite the '9XXX' Class having sixteen regular diagrammed duties (*see table above*). This was attributable to the allocation of new '78000' Class 2-6-0s to Oswestry and



On Friday 30th September 1959 photographer Dick Riley had a footplate pass to ride on No.9017 from Dovey Junction to Pwllheli courtesy of the Western Region. Just before the four-coach 11.05am got away from Dovey Junction he photographed the crew of Driver Thomas and his young fireman along with Inspector Wiggett of Shrewsbury; for the young fireman this was to be his first turn on a '9XXX' Class 4-4-0. As can be seen, the coast road to Barmouth and Pwllheli curved sharply away from Dovey Junction and the trestle bridge crossing of the Afon Dovey before heading straight across the fields to Gogarth where the coast was tightly hugged to Penhelig and Aberdovey.
(R. C. Riley/Transport Treasury)

then Machynlleth from December 1952 onwards, new Swindon-built '75000' Class 4 6 0s to Oswestry from November 1953 and Swindon-built Ivatt 2MT 2-6-0s also initially to Oswestry from November 1953. No.9017 was coupled to a different tender, Churchward 3,500-gallon No.1997, in August 1954 while in Aberystwyth shops. This pairing lasted until July 1955 when No.9017 was reunited with repaired tender No.1684.

In early 1956 the Gloucester Railway Society requested an 'Earl' to work part of its proposed 'South Wales Rail Tour' on 12th May. No.9017 was selected and was worked down to Gloucester Horton Road shed where it received considerable attention to its appearance. With a load of just three coaches No.9017 worked the special from Gloucester Central to Newport. There '8750' Class 0-6-0PT No.3714 took over as far as Merthyr whence Dean 0-6-0 No.2538 worked to Neath General and on to Caerphilly Works. Waiting was Taff Vale 0-6-2T No.371 which was in charge of the special back to Cardiff General where No.9017 was waiting to work the final leg back to Gloucester Central.



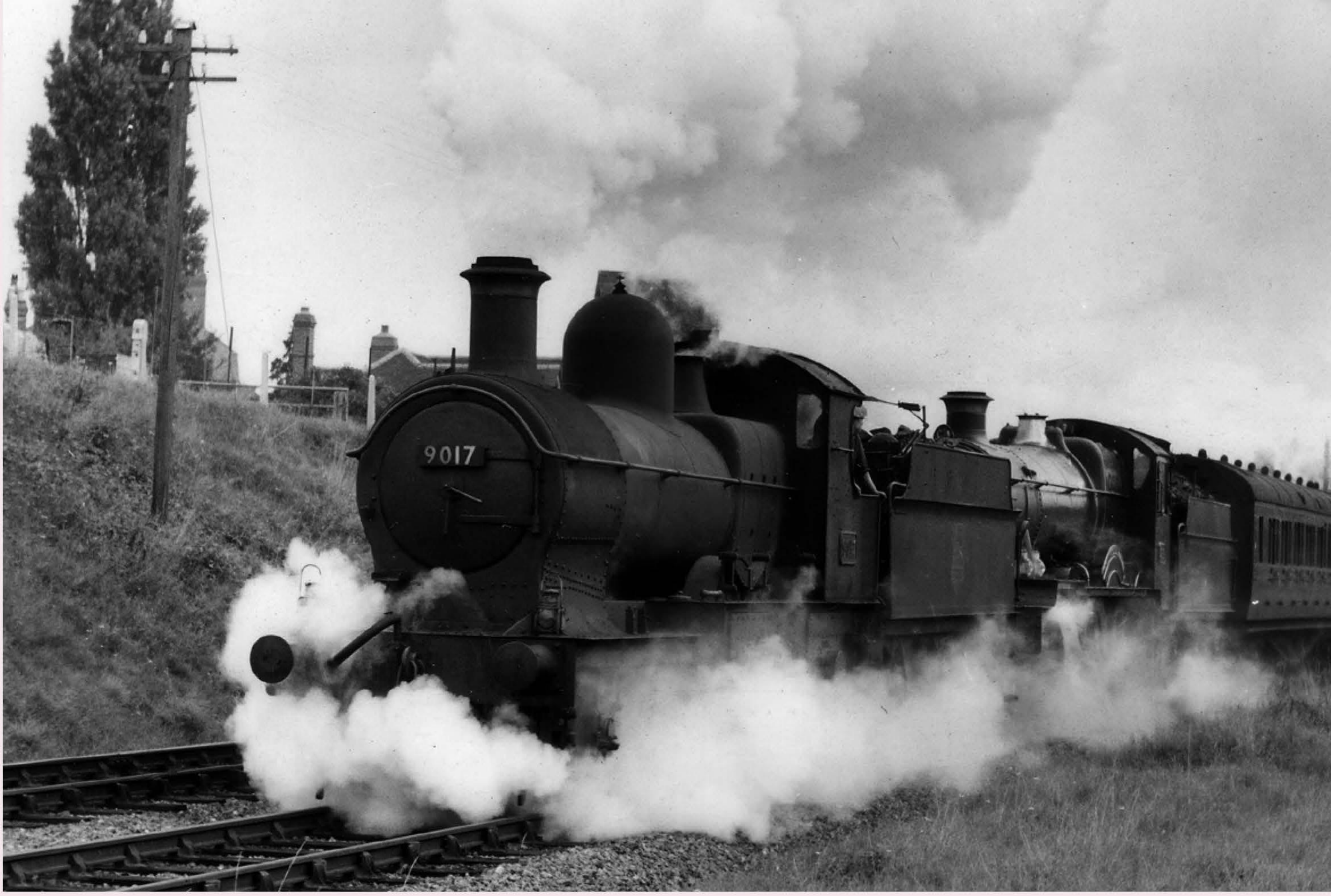
Llyyngwril, between the Dysinni Bridge and the Ffriog avalanche shelter, was seventeen miles north of Dovey Junction. On 30th September No.9017 took water at Llwyngwril and has stopped at the down platform allowing Dick Riley to photograph both train and up platform, which despite housing the main buildings was only capable of accommodating three coaches; longer formations required the locomotive to draw up the train despite both loops being 729 yards long. The station itself was situated on the seaward side of the village and the Towyn to Dolgelly road. There was no footbridge so passengers crossed the loop line by way of the walkway at the Barmouth end of the platforms. The down platform was only provided with a small shelter.
(R. C. Riley/Transport Treasury)

Back in Wales the 'Earls' lost much of their winter timetable passenger work to the Standards and the 'blue' rated '43XX' 2-6-0s and 'Manors'. This brought about a handful of withdrawals; seven had gone by the end of 1956, while others were put into store for the duration of the winter timetables. The newly overhauled No.9017 returned to Aberystwyth and remained in traffic until 24th September 1956 when placed into store on the shed's back road. Interestingly photographs show No.9017 at Aberystwyth while the Engine Record Card says it was stored at Abercynon, near Aberdare – surely a typographical error.

Despite Swindon having improved the steaming of the 'Earls' in the early 1950s, the class was designated as 'A' power class from 'B' class. The orifices of the blastpipes were opened up with hugely beneficial effects on the steaming. For a while the maximum loads for the class had been reduced, as like the 'Duke' Class 4-4-0s before them they were susceptible to losing their feet on the Central Wales Division's steeper gradients. This saw many of their remaining duties turned over to the sure-footed '2251' Class 0-6-0s. The effect of this was to see the class reduced to local all-station services and pilot turns. The latter were ideal for the class but the Cambrian drivers preferred the Churchward 2-6-2T on the all-stations work. However, such was the volume of the Central Wales Division's summer timetable and extras that the class was not withdrawn *en masse,* ensuring sufficient locomotives were available to act as pilots over the both the ex-Cambrian and ex-GWR main lines into and out of England and to cover locals services when required.

No.9017 was taken out of store on 15th June 1957 and worked out of Aberystwyth for the summer until placed back in store at the shed on 21st September. In mid-April 1958 No 9017 was taken out of store and steamed again as it had been requested to work the Railway Enthusiasts' Club four-coach 'Severn Rambler' rail tour on Sunday 20th April from Windsor to Cheltenham Spa St. James via High Wycombe and Oxford, returning on the main line from Severn Tunnel Junction with '5400' Class 0-6-0PT No.5417 taking over for some branch line workings. According to Dick Riley No.9017 made light work of the twenty-mile climb from the centre of the Severn Tunnel maintaining 54mph up the 1 in 100 to Chipping Sodbury. Badminton was passed at 41mph and despite some slight slipping the 4-4-0 knocked six minutes off the booked schedule to Badminton. Then despite a maximum of 61mph at Little Somerford four minutes were dropped to Swindon. A crew change at Didcot resulted in some disappointing running that brought about the 23-minute schedule to Reading occupying 32 minutes with a maximum of 45mph through Tilehurst. This falling-away of performance may well have been the result of just coming out of store as the crew from Severn Tunnel Junction noticed that No.9017 was 'groaning a bit at the front end'.

Having worked back to Machynlleth No.9017 was checked over by the shed's fitters, as along with No.9021 it was booked to work the Festiniog Railway Society's AGM special on 26th April. The special would be powered by double-framed 4-4-0s throughout with No.3440 *City of Truro* in charge between Paddington and Ruabon, returning from Shrewsbury to Paddington, while the 'Earls' would run from Ruabon to Minffordd through the Dee Valley returning to Shrewsbury via Machynlleth and Talerddig. With a fully laden eight-coach



During the summer of 1960 No.9017 was often used by Machynlleth shed to pilot the heavy summer 'Cambrian Coast Express' workings to and from Shrewsbury. On 2nd September 1960 it made what was probably its final out and back run on this duty with 'Manor' No.7818 *Granville Manor*. Having worked the up train, it returned to Machynlleth on the down working and here the train is seen working hard having just got away from Shrewsbury. As was usual at this time, Aberystwyth shed has turned out No.7818 in almost ex-works condition while it appears that No.9017 has had little attention from the Machynlleth cleaners, something that would change before the end of the month. (Author's Collection)

train the time keeping throughout was exemplary on what was not a particularly demanding schedule.

Available for traffic for most of the summer of 1958 No.9017 was stopped for three weeks at Oswestry Works from mid-May to early June for unclassified repairs. These included changing the worn bogie wheels, replacing the safety valves while the firebox received a new brick arch, fusible plugs and some replacement copper stays. Back at Machynlleth it was recorded the length and breadth of the Cambrian lines and during the peak summer period was often seen at Machynlleth standing as pilot to double-head the heaviest Saturday trains to Talerddig or Shrewsbury depending on the loadings. Another regular turn was acting as the Pwllheli station pilot. At the end of the summer timetable on 15th September No.9017 was prepared for winter and put into store at Machynlleth.

Returned to traffic on 16th June 1959 No.9017's summer usage mirrored that of the previous year and on 22nd September was put back into store at Aberystwyth. Five of the class were placed into store with Nos.9015, 9018 and 9018 at Aberystwyth, No.9004 at Wellington and No.9014 at Croes Newydd. Of these five only Nos.9014 and 9017 would return to traffic for the 1960 summer timetable.

When returned to steam No.9017 was sent back to Machynlleth and was reported back on shed on 16th June. By this date No.9017 was the only small locomotive with a front bogie at Machynlleth, which allowed its use as a pilot with a 'Manor' or '75000' Class 4-6-0 over Talerddig. The same rationale applied to No.9014 at Croes Newydd but over the gradients of the Dee Valley line and along the coast road to Pwllheli. To ensure No.9017 was kept in good condition Machynlleth regularly used it on local passenger trains to Pwllheli where it often stood as station pilot.

The week beginning Monday 5th July illustrates No.9017's usefulness. On the Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday it was booked to work a return all-stations passenger duty to Pwllheli. Thursday was a shed day and on the Friday it piloted No.7818 *Granville Manor* on the up 'Cambrian Coast Express', returning as pilot on the down train. A week later it was reported to be at Moat Lane standing pilot for heavy trains going over Talerddig. Other reports show No.9017 on pilot duties at Newtown, Welshpool and Pwllheli.

The last special working for No.9017 came on Saturday 24th September when it was booked to work the Shrewsbury to Towyn and return legs of the Talyllyn Railway Preservation Society's AGM special with '43XX' Class 2-6-0 No.7330. The special used the stock of the 'Bristolian' and was worked from Paddington by '47XX' Class 2-8-0 No.4701. Both Nos.9017 and 7330 were smartly turned out, although the 4-4-0's tender was showing its age. For many this working was believed to be No 9017's last and a collection was made to help raise sufficient money to buy the 'Earl'. But this was not the case as on Tuesday 27th May it was reported as being in charge of a Butlin's Holiday Special heading for Pwllheli.

Friday 30th September found it back at work on the Machynlleth to Pwllheli road and courtesy of the Western Region photographer Dick Riley had been given a footplate pass to ride on No.9017 and was accompanied by Inspector Wiggett of Shrewsbury. The day was a wild and blustery one with gale force winds. Booked to work the four-coach 11.05am from Dovey Junction, No.9017 was worked easily until after Aberdovey when notched up to 35% and speed rose to 45mph. The climb to Friog was made in fine style but crossing Barmouth Bridge showed the inadequacies of the spartan cab as the gale whipped white horses on the Mawddach estuary. Departing from Barmouth at 12.25pm, No.9017 was worked easily and although the 90-minute schedule for the 33 miles to Pwllheli seemed excessive, at least 25 minutes were taken up by seventeen intermediate station stops. The return trip south saw the heavens open and again the rain beat down but No.9017 showed its mastery of the route and load, despite a tendency to loose its feet on the steeper gradients in the inclement conditions.

Despite No.9017 being close to

withdrawal, it continued to be used during the first two weeks of October on the 8.05am Machynlleth to Aberystwyth and the return at 5.19pm. Finally it was withdrawn on 25th October and moved to Oswestry Works along with the two Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway 0-6-0Ts, *The Earl* and *The Countess,* until the purchase price of £1,500 was raised. During its GWR and BR working life it was credited with amassing 422,597 miles, around the average for the class. However, No.9014, which spent the majority of its working life at Machynlleth, was credited with 504,706 miles on similar duties to No.9017. Why this discrepancy has never been satisfactorily explained.

On 14th February 1962 the 'Earl' was steamed again and worked down to Old Oak Common. The following day it ran over the West London Extension Line to Clapham Junction and on the Brighton where it was turned to face north before proceeding to Sheffield Park on the Bluebell Railway.

No.9017 quickly entered traffic in BR black livery but serious problems were experienced with the tender and a replacement was acquired. The decision to fit *Earl of Berkeley* nameplates, despite never being carried by the locomotive in GWR ownership, was taken and these were purchased from BR. Overhauled during the winter of 1964/65 No.9017 was restored to GWR livery as No.3217. In 1969 it ran over 1,300 miles on Bluebell trains. In order to keep it in service 1971 saw it coupled to an ex-South Eastern & Chatham C Class tender and by the end of 1972 had run 9,067 miles on the Bluebell. Withdrawn for overhaul in 1973, No 3217 was not to return to traffic until 1982. After working until the expiry of its boiler ticket another overhaul was carried out and *Earl of Berkeley* returned to service in 2003. During its preservation days the 'Earl' has been seen in action with the only other surviving GWR outside-framed 4-4-0 *City of Truro,* once at Didcot and once on the Bluebell Railway, and has also been seen on a number of ex-GWR/BR preserved railways such as the Llangollen and South Devon as well as the ex-London & South Western Watercress Line. Upon the expiry of this boiler ticket No.9017 was stored awaiting a slot in the Sheffield Park workshops.

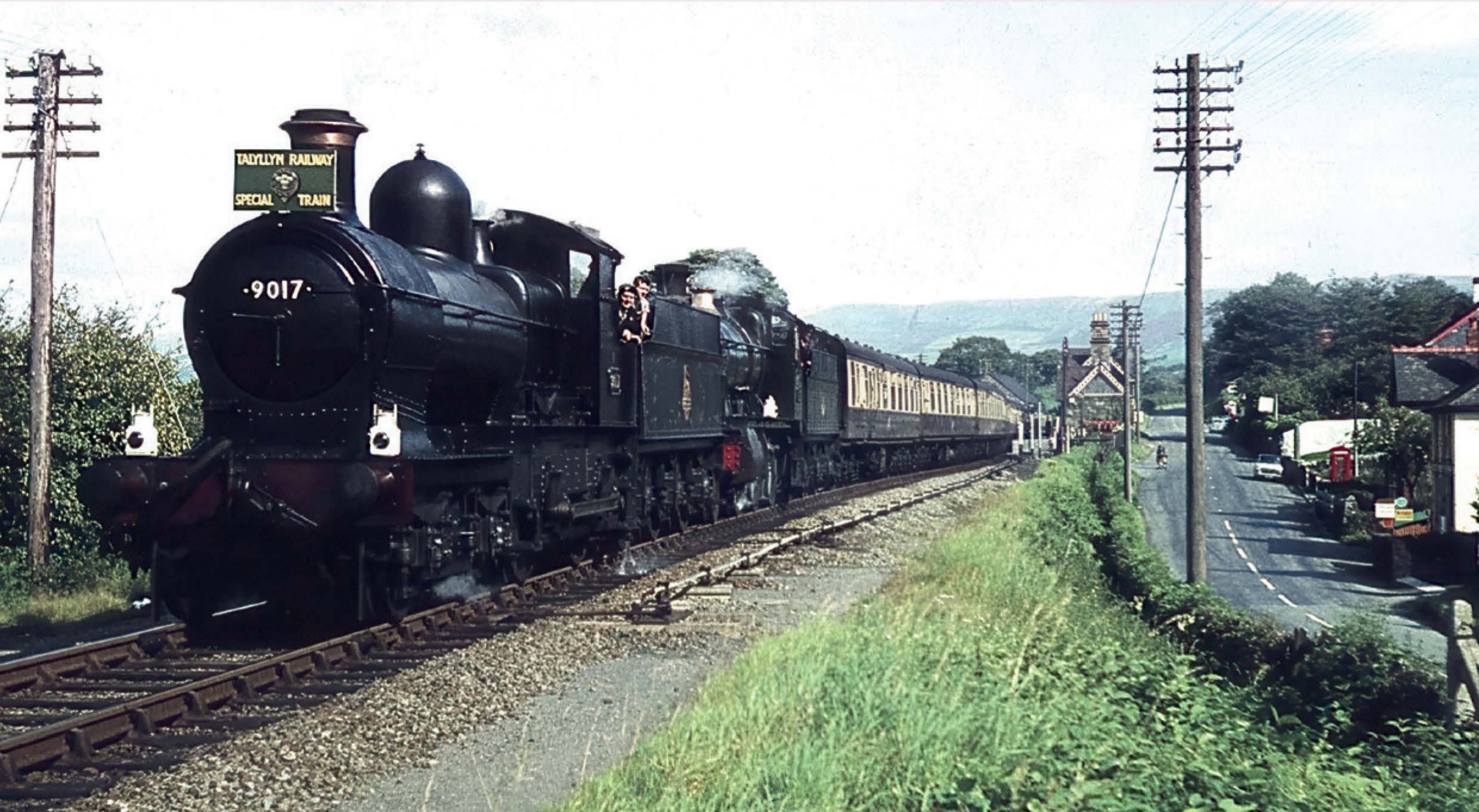
The Bluebell still hopes to overhaul No.9017, but its place in the queue has been taken by Adams 'Radial' 4-4-2T No.30583. With the Bluebell giving priority to Class 4 and above locomotives the 'Earl' has been loaned to the Vale of Rheidol Railway's museum at Aberystwyth for a minimum of two years. A more fitting place for a locomotive which spent its whole GWR and BR career on the Cambrian Division is hard to imagine.

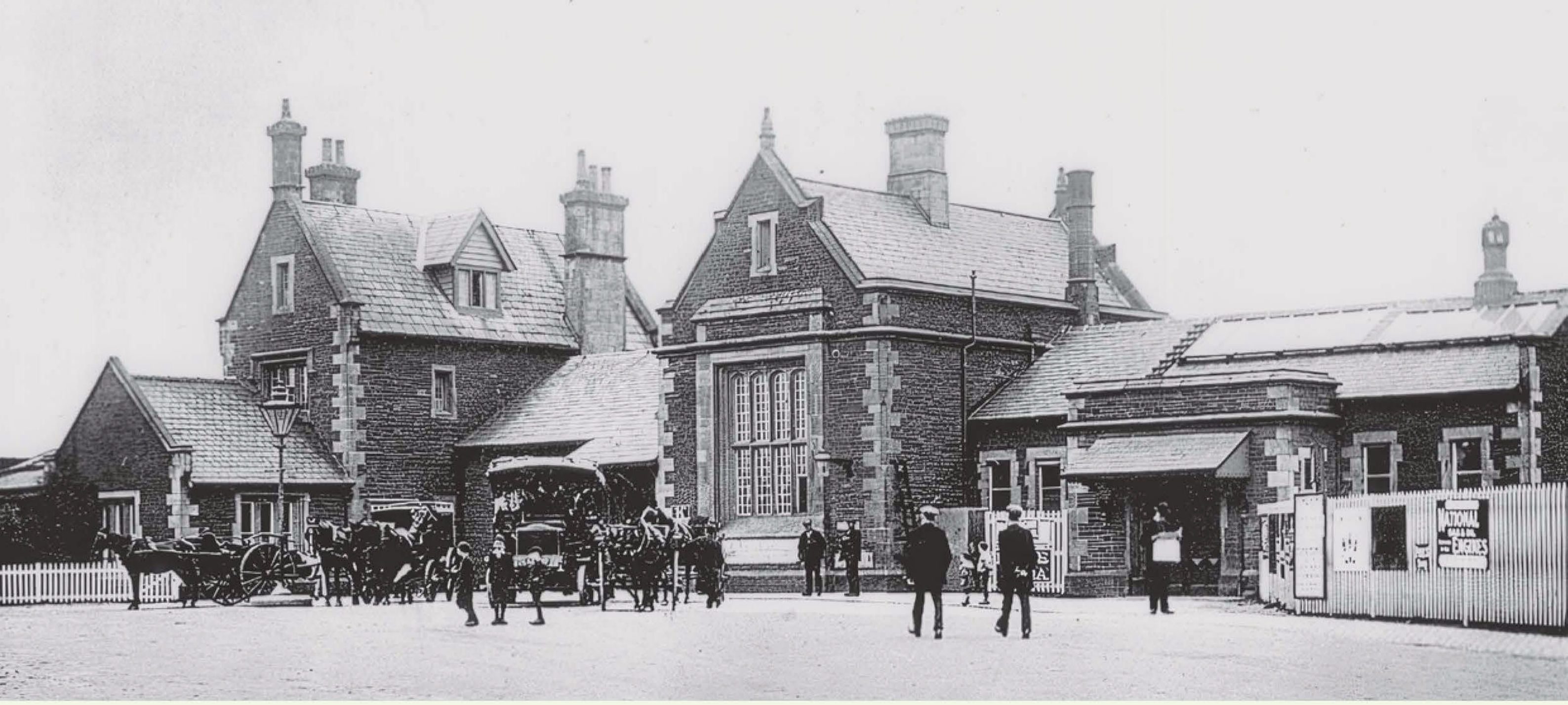
The author acknowledges the help of Laurence Waters and the Great Western Trust in the preparation of this article along with correspondence with Pat Dalton.

References

Bill Peto's Engine Record Card for No.3217 – Courtesy Laurence Waters GWT
Locomotives of the GWR Part 7 – RCTS – 1954
Railway Observers – RTCS – 1938 1962
Railway World August 1953 and April 1963 – Ian Allan
The Dukedog Story – T. R. Gomm – Bluebell Railway – 1982
Cambrian Companionship – T. P. (Pat) Dalton – OPC – 1985
Steam Days No.230, October 2008

The Talyllyn Railway Preservation Society's AGM special on Saturday 24th September 1960 gets away towards Machynlleth from Cemmes Road in the charge of green-liveried '43XX' Class 2 6 0 No.7330 piloted by No.9017 and this was the last special BR working for No.9017. Both locomotives were turned out in exceptionally clean condition and looked magnificent on what was weather-wise a beautiful day in the Cambrian Mountains. After arrival at Towyn the locomotives took the stock back to Machynlleth where they and the coaches were serviced. Worked back to Towyn for the early evening departure, this would not be the last time No.9017 appeared at Towyn as it remained in traffic for another month. (Colour-Rail.com)





Penrith station, early 1900s, where wild scenes of enthusiasm took place as Cumbrian troops departed for active service in 1900. The invasion of railway stations by crowds wanting to witness the departure for South Africa of local men was a common feature during the first months of the Boer War. (Author's Collection)

BRITAIN'S RAILWAY BOER WAR 1899-1902

BERNICE BAYNHAM continues her account of the role played by the home railways, following the outbreak of the Boer War in October 1899, in the mobilisation of troops for service in South Africa at the beginning of 1900.

The weather turns

Over the second weekend of February 1900 there was a four days' blizzard across the north of England and Wales. Unfortunately, that was the weekend that some volunteer companies had to leave their headquarters for embarkation and so there could be no cancellations of special trains. The Westmorland and Cumberland Yeomanry contingent was ordered by the district headquarters, in Chester, that it had to leave Penrith by a special train on Sunday morning, 11th February, at 4.35, arriving at the Canada Dock, Liverpool, at 9.30. The train would convey five officers, 116 men and 36 horses. "On Sunday morning, before the men assemble, the horses will be taken to the station and boxed. The troopers' horses will be placed in cattle trucks and the officers' horses in horse boxes. On account of the train being a 'mixed' one, in compliance with the Board of Trade regulations, it can only travel 20 miles an hour. As soon as the horses are boxed, the special train will be made up and shunted to the main platform. The men will assemble, between half-past three and four, and in that order will march to the station. They will then entrain. Arrangements have been made for a supply of hot coffee and rolls at Preston station." (*Mid-Cumberland and North Westmorland Herald,* Saturday 10th February 1900)

The scenes in Penrith town and at the station in the early hours of Sunday were memorable ones, the crowd seeing off the men being estimated at between 5,000 and 6,000. "Despite the awkward hour of departure, and the fact that at the time Penrith was enveloped in a blinding blizzard of snow, thousands of townspeople turned out to give the men a hearty send-off, and the enthusiasm exceeded the hopes of the most sanguine. It is safe to say that sleep visited the eyes of few people on Saturday night, for by two o'clock on Sunday morning crowds of people were streaming through the snow-clad streets in the direction of Victoria-road, where the men were to assemble. By three o'clock the streets were packed from end to end. The Banquet Committee had arranged a torchlight procession of 76 torches to precede the Yeomanry, and at 3.30 these, with the Penrith Fire Brigade in their helmets, had assembled in Victoria-road. The contingent began to assemble about 3 o'clock, and as the men left their billets dressed in their great coats and carrying their rifles, they were besieged by townsmen eager to have the honour of carrying their kits which were done up in white canvas bags.

"The flaring torches, casting a lurid glare and masses of flickering shade over the dense crowd, the cheering masses of people through which the Yeomanry, impeded as they were by their loved ones and relatives, had almost to cut their way, so eager was the crowd to get a last hand-shake; the driving snow and white-clad streets – all made up a picture unreal and fantastic, which will never be forgotten. A little imagination, and with the deafening cheers omitted, the whole might have been a scene from Napoleon's retreat from Moscow, instead of which it was an outburst of the national patriotism. As the procession passed up King-street the crowd wanted something more patriotic than 'John Peel', so the band started 'Soldiers of the Queen', which was at once taken up by a thousand throats. Up Castlegate the crowd was so dense that accidents were narrowly averted. As the men of the Imperial Yeomanry passed the Agricultural Hotel, which with the adjoining Auction Mart, will be full of reminiscences for these farmers' sons, one of them voiced the feeling of the others by shouting out 'Good old Agricultural!' This was the signal for an outburst of cheering from the men themselves, which was taken up by the crowd in the Station-square.

"When the Station-square was reached about 4 o'clock, there was a cry of 'Halt' and the doors being closed, the Yeomanry had to wait, which they did patiently and resignedly. In a few minutes the vast following which had crowded roadway and causeway from the square to the station, massed around the station premises, where many quietly stood till the doors should be opened. The impatient spirits of many more would not brook delay, and at once besieged the premises in various directions, some scaling the walls both east and west in their determination to reach the platform. One big burly fellow tried the little door inserted in the gates of the goods station, and as it was barred, he stepped back a few steps and rushing at the obstruction like a battering ram, he sent the door flying, and the people rushed through, creeping on hands and knees under a row of coal waggons, only to find their ingress to the platform barred by the person of a large policeman, who kindly but firmly said there was 'no admittance except on business'. Down at the other end, in like manner, Supt. Bell and Sergt. Illingworth stemmed the surging tide of humanity by saying 'thus far shalt thou come but no further'. This was the position when Mr. Phizackerley opened the station doors to admit the soldiers, but the omnipotence of numbers here proved too much for official regulations, and the thousands who had not 'climbed up some other way' poured through the door and took up position to say 'Farewell'.

"The train, which had been prepared some time, and comprised a number of corridor carriages and the horse boxes and carefully sheeted trucks containing the officers' and trooper's horses, now drew slowly alongside the platform, and notwithstanding the crush and confusion inevitable, the men soon boarded the train, upon which a never-to-be-forgotten scene ensued. Once in the carriages

Penrith station, looking south. It was from the left-hand platform that the men of the Westmorland Cumberland Yeomanry would have boarded their train for Liverpool early on the morning of Sunday 11th February 1900. (T. J. Edgington Collection)

S AND THE

PART TWO

the men crowded to the door to say a last 'good-bye' to the loved ones they were leaving, it might be never to see again, and even to the casual onlooker the scene was most pathetic. The warm clasp of the hearty handshake, the farewell kiss, the wistful lingering look of love, the 'God bless yous' and the 'Good-bye, old chap' ran all along the line, as with tearful eyes parent, lover, friend parted, it is to be hoped, to meet again under brighter and happier auspices. The band meantime roused the patriotic sentiments of the crowd by playing such tunes as 'Soldiers of the Queen' and then, as the moment of departure drew nigh, the strains of 'Auld Lang Syne' brought tears to many eyes. The National Anthem was then struck up, and as it closed, the long train slowly passed out into the comparative darkness, amid cheers."

When they arrived at Canada Dock to board the White Star Australian liner *Afric,* "there was witnessed one of the most glorious spectacles which the docks have presented during recent warlike times. The troops comprised the 23rd Company of the Duke of Lancaster's Yeomanry – 5 officers, 116 rank and file, 111 horses, and two road vehicles; and the 24th Company of the Westmorland and Cumberland Yeomanry (Penrith) – 5 officers, 116 rank and file, and 33 horses. There also embarked a hospital staff, comprising one officer, three rank and file, and two horses; a veterinary staff, with one officer and two horses, four rank and file servants, and 122 horses (remounts). The Yeomanry were timed to arrive at a somewhat early hour, but there is many a slip between the cup and the lip. The men had a terrible experience in coming from their respective destinations to Liverpool. Snow had fallen heavily, and the cold was intense. Active service evidently had its drawbacks, extreme of heat and cold have to be faced. The journey to the Liverpool docks was trying, but it was cheerfully, nay laughingly, borne, and all detrained in high spirits. On arrival in Liverpool the surroundings had a thoroughly Siberian look; the snow encrusted the ground to the depth of nearly a foot. There were few spectators about at first, owing to a searching north-easter, which tried the mettle of the most hardy.

"The band of the 4th Volunteer Battalion King's Liverpool Regiment, by permission of Colonel de Silva, was present, facing fearful atmospheric odds, and played the Lancaster Yeomen tunefully from the Bankfield Station of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway to the Canada Dock. The same band also gleefully accompanied the Westmorland and Cumberland Yeomanry, who were timed to reach the Canada Dock Station of the London and North-Western Railway at half-past nine. The tramping of men and horses, and the gradual swelling of the crowd soon turned the virgin snow around the Canada Dock into a veritable puddle, through which the Yeomen host had to charge, carbine in hand, and with heavy accoutrements to boot.

"The Overhead Railway Company had made special arrangements to cater for the full gratification of public curiosity." (*Mid-Cumberland and North Westmorland Herald,* Saturday 10th February 1900)

An even earlier start from Wrexham the same Sunday morning, but rather than embarking from Liverpool, the 2nd Volunteer Battalion Royal Welsh Fusiliers had to travel to Southampton. The *North Wales Express* reported their departure: "[At] two o'clock on Sunday morning, in a blinding snowstorm, the Volunteers who belonged to the Carnarvon, Portmadoc, Llandudno, and Flint Corps, and who had volunteered for the front, paraded the streets of Wrexham. The sight was indescribable. Despite the severity of the weather, the townspeople turned out in their hundreds to show their appreciation of the gallantry of the Volunteers, and to give them as hearty a send-off as was possible under the unfavourable circumstances. The scene, during the march from the town to the station, was one that will ever be impressed upon the minds of all who were present. The station premises were crowded, and salvoes of cheers and the explosion of fog signals rent the air, and could be heard at the other end of the town. When the men entrained the cheers were

Preston station looking north on 17th March 1907. Here, seven years earlier, hot coffee and rolls were provided for the Cumbrian troops on their way to Liverpool to embark for South Africa. (Pendragon Collection)

again repeated, and when the train moved off the enthusiasm was beyond description.

"The train passed through Chester, and at Crewe the men were joined by the Prescot contingent. Parting cheers were given by the crowd in the station, and off the train went. Birmingham was reached at nine a.m. Through the kindness of Colonel Davies-Cooke and Colonel Sheriff Roberts, all the men had hot breakfast. The train arrived at Southampton at 3pm. Through the blundering of the War Office the men would have been without food till 7.30pm had not refreshments been provided by 'The Absent-Minded Beggar' Fund."

Even a solitary St. John Ambulance Brigade volunteer experienced an unforgettable departure from Penrith. Late on Friday evening, 9th March, "Pvt. Cowin was lifted shoulder high and carried in triumph by members of the Ambulance Brigade into the densely packed streets, where the Sons of Temperance Band was waiting. Here about 2,000 people were stationed, and to the strains of 'Soldiers of the Queen', and the deafening cheers from the multitude of throats, with a Union Jack carried over the head of the hero, the procession marched to the station. On arrival there an unparalleled scene was witnessed. The station officials had considerately left the station open, probably having some respect for the fabric. For a quarter of an hour the dense crowd was simply shot, like coals into a cellar, through the doors on to the platform. No official regulations could have withstood the rush, and for a time the scene at the approaches to the station and the entrance was nothing but a mass of whirling arms, and frantic, cheering humanity. Standing on seats and swarming up pillars, the crowd managed to find a foothold, whilst the band played patriotic airs in sections, standing as near to each other as circumstances would permit. After half an hour's wait, during which songs were sung and cheers repeatedly given, the train steamed in, and the surging mass of people was too densely packed to see the hero of all the enthusiasm entrain, but as the train steamed out Mr. Cowin came in for a demonstration which ought to remain in his memory as long as he lives." (*Mid-Cumberland and North Westmorland Herald,* Saturday 10th March 1900)

Refreshments (1)

A Captain Eady, of the Royal Engineers, was travelling on a mail train on Friday evening, 12th January 1900, on his way to Southampton, where he was due to join a transport ship that was leaving for the Cape the next morning. The train arrived at Neath at 9.24pm and Eady decided to go to the refreshment room for a cup of coffee, without informing the guard. When he came back out on to the platform, the train was already moving away and he attempted to get into a compartment, but was pulled back by a porter. Eady was left on the platform with his luggage on the train and unsuccessfully offered a large sum of money for a special train to get him to Southampton. He sent a telegram to the War Office, then the next day travelled to London and reported himself to the War Office, intending to depart for South Africa at a later date.

The West Riding Regiment Volunteers departed from Halifax for Southampton, where they were to board the SS *Guelph* for South Africa. They had left Halifax at 11.30pm by special train and went by the Willesden Junction route.

Liverpool's Canada Dock was where the Cumbrian troop boarded the White Star Line's SS *Afric*. In this view the Pacific Steam Navigation Company's SS *Orcoma* is being coaled there; this ship served as an armed merchant cruiser during World War I. (Pendragon Collection)

"At Grantham, where we arrived about 3am, our men had a sample of the most unselfish and patriotic generosity I have experienced for a long time. The station was filled with an enthusiastic multitude, who seemed anxious to do all in their power to increase the comfort of the men. By this time most of the men were sound asleep, and until they realised what was the matter they did not much relish the efforts made to rouse them. But how much they appreciated the kindness of the people there is almost too deep for words. An unlimited supply of steaming hot coffee was handed into the compartments, along with any number of biscuits. In addition, a mysterious looking parcel, which was afterwards found contained meat sandwiches, was put into each compartment, and a pint champagne bottle filled with beer was handed to every two men. The spirit in which these two comforts were conferred enhanced their value. Everybody seemed anxious to shake hands with the men, and the sympathetic tremor in their 'Good luck to you, my lad', uttered in the pleasant dialect of the district, affected the men deeply. The unselfishness of the act was specially marked, for we understood that every volunteer-train coming through Grantham was similarly treated, and the people of the pretty town may rest assured that their timely and thoughtful hospitality will never be forgotten by those who appreciated it. They realise, at any rate, what a debt they owe to the men who have voluntarily undertaken the duty of going thousands of miles to fight their battles for them.

"The train, which had been lengthened at Grantham by the addition of the carriages containing the Lincoln Service Company, then continued its way. Peterborough was reached at 4.10, and we arrived in London just after six, when the city looked anything but the busy hive it would become in a few hours. The shunting necessary to get us on to the Southampton line took up some time, and it was seven ere we reached Clapham Junction. Here we passed the Gordon Highlanders, who had been in the train since one o'clock on Friday afternoon. There were many enthusiastic exchanges between our men and theirs, the most popular cry being 'What ho! Good old Guelph'. As we neared Southampton the residents were responsible for a good many kindly demonstrations, and patriotic flags were displayed and waved at many places en route." (*Huddersfield Daily Chronicle,* Monday 19th February 1900)

Netley Hospital, Hampshire

From late 1899 large numbers of British soldiers began to return to England, being invalided home, whether from wounds or sickness (there were more than 20,000 British casualties in South Africa over the course of the war, over 60% of the deaths being caused by typhoid and enteric fever), and the majority of them were landed at Southampton for the Royal Victoria Hospital at Netley (some invalids were landed at Plymouth, for treatment in the hospital there). A single track line from Netley station to the hospital was completed in April 1900 and an early visitor along the new line was Queen Victoria, who travelled from Windsor's London & South Western Railway station to Netley by a special train on Wednesday 16th May 1900 to spend almost an hour and 40 minutes in the hospital, being pushed round in a bath chair, visiting and talking to invalided soldiers before returning to Windsor, again by special train.

The following day's *Birmingham Daily Post* reported that "Hitherto her Majesty has had to leave the train at the little roadside station at Netley and drive for about a mile to the front entrance of the hospital. Patients arriving from the transports at Southampton had also to undergo the fatigue of this change, with the often, to them, painful drive to the hospital. It was on learning this that the Queen suggested the construction of a line right up to the hospital itself. This line has now been completed, and although two trainloads of invalids have already passed over it, the formal opening of the line for general use may be said to have been performed by her Majesty yesterday, although there was no ceremony attached to this part of the proceedings. The new line runs from Netley Station to the central corridor at the back of the hospital, and it is not more than three-quarters of a mile in length. On reaching Netley Station the Royal train was stopped while the engine was changed, and the train then slowly steamed over the new line through the hospital grounds. A considerable crowd had assembled outside the station, and there were hearty cheers for her Majesty as the saloon carriage passed. The terminus, in front of the central corridor, had been gaily decorated for the occasion."

Railway accidents

There were several injuries at Blackford, between Perth and Stirling, when a troop train reversed into buffers. According to the *Aberdeen Journal,* Wednesday 10th January 1900:

"Shortly before seven p.m. last Wednesday, information was received in Perth that a serious accident had occurred to a special train, consisting of 3 dozen carriages, and carrying 150 Seaforth Highlanders from Fort George, and 75 of the 3rd Battalion Black Watch (Militia) on their way to Southampton, en route for South Africa. It is said that at Blackford, about 20 miles south of Perth, the train was run into a loop line to allow the 5.47 postal express from Perth to pass, and that on the station officials giving the signal for it to proceed, in some unaccountable way, instead of coming out, it dashed back against the buffers at the end of the line, with the result that the two rear carriages were telescoped, and that about a dozen men were injured. The three rear carriages were occupied by the Black Watch. Of the injured men, one had a broken leg, and seven had bruised limbs, while the others had scalp and other wounds. The ambulance corps from Perth Station was at once sent out by special train, and eight of the injured men were conveyed to Perth by ten o'clock. They were as follows: – Charles Anderson (22), broken leg, R. Harris (19); bruised leg; Pat Reilly (24), bruised leg; Pat M'Cann (24), bruised leg; James Duncan, bruised leg; James Cushlie, bruised leg; Charles Clark, bruised leg; Charles Allardyce, bruised leg.

"At the infirmary Drs. Stirling, Norwell and Parker Stewart were in waiting, and attended to the injured men, who had previously got first aid from a local doctor at Blackford and the station ambulance corps.

"A Perth correspondent says: – The cause of the accident to the troop train was a simple misunderstanding for which the officials are not to blame. The military train arrived at Blackford at 6.5, and was shunted on to the up loop line to allow the postal train to pass, which arrived five minutes late. After the postal train had gone through, a porter went along the line with the staff keys for the driver of the military train. The latter mistook the porter's lamp for a signal to back, which he accordingly did, and collided with the goods waggons. The military carriages were telescoped, two in the rear being smashed. Several soldiers proceeded on the journey with slight injuries."

On Sunday 24th June 1900 permanent way men had been working on repairs at Tapnage Tunnel, between Botley and Fareham, and about half-past four fourteen of them left to go to Fareham, most wanting to catch the 5.30 train home from there to Eastleigh. They used a trolley, propelling it by long sticks, but near Funtley Bridge, north of Fareham, disaster struck when a special train that had left Southampton at 4.23pm, bound for Gosport, and carrying invalided soldiers from South Africa, came up behind the trolley. Most of the permanent way men managed to jump clear in time, but two men and the trolley were smashed to pieces.

A collision occurred on Friday morning, 15th March 1901, when a southward-bound North Eastern troop train was unable to stop at Peterborough's Great Northern station when its brakes failed to act, due to the slippery state of the rails, and it hit a Great Northern coal train which was crossing over the main line. The coal train was knocked off the line, and three of the troop train's 21 carriages had to be removed. The troops, 346 officers and men, all Volunteers of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, the Highland Light Infantry and the Scottish Rifles, were shaken, but the worst injury reported was a hand cut by glass from a broken window.

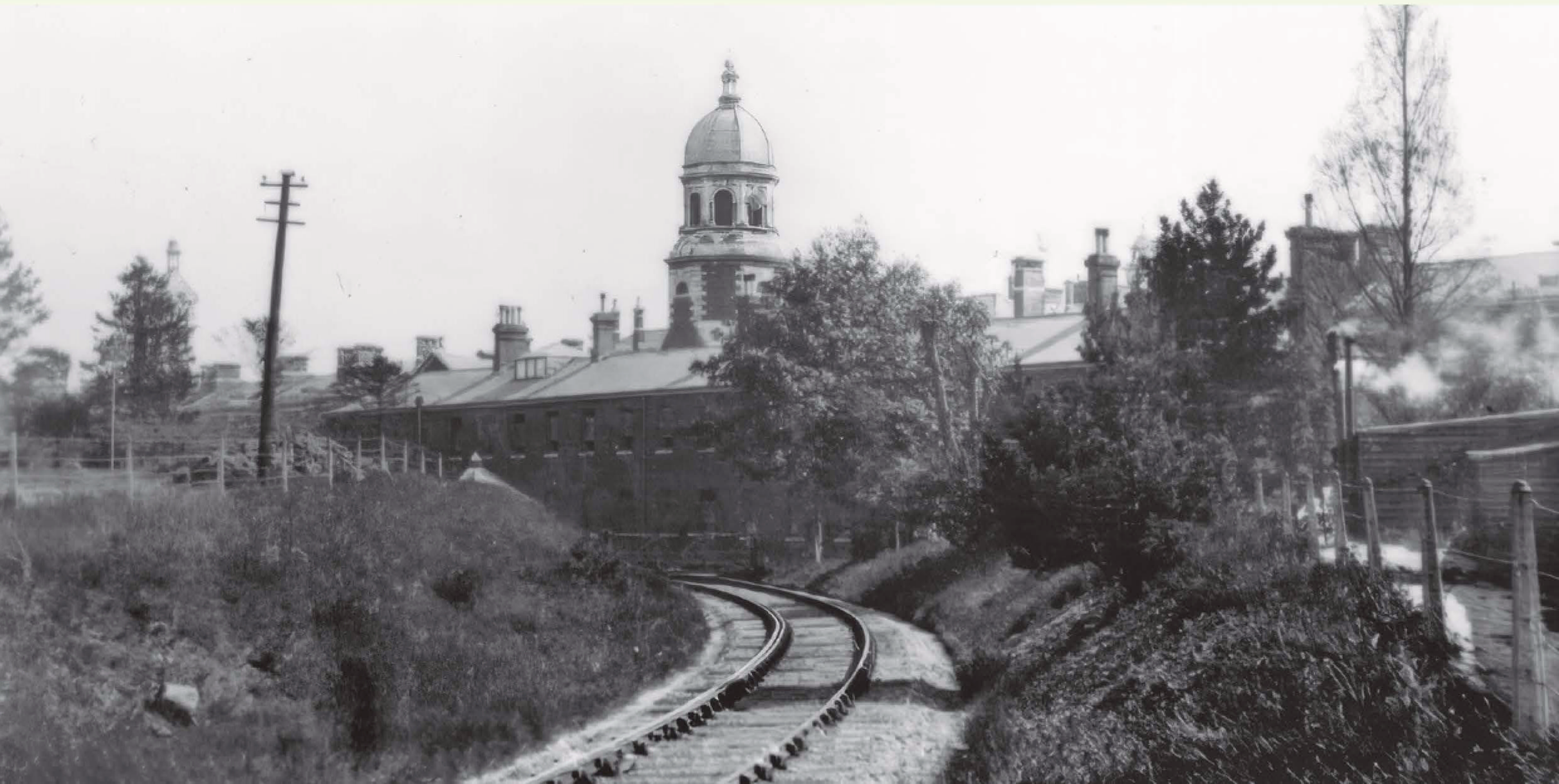
"There was an alarming occurrence on Monday morning near Staines Junction, on the London and South-Western Railway. A special train, taking a strong contingent of Yeomanry to Southampton for embarkation, was pulled up at the junction in consequence of the line being blocked by shunting operations. By some error it was re-shunted while goods trucks were still in the way, and there was a slight collision. The engine of the military train was damaged, but there were no personal injuries." (*Cheltenham Chronicle,* Saturday 6th April 1901)

* * * * *

The capitals of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State, Pretoria and Johannesburg respectively, were both captured by the British and Colonial troops inside a week, 31st May and 5th June 1900. In Britain it was assumed that this would be the end and Commander-in-Chief Lord Roberts announced on 3rd September that the war was over – the fighting didn't end until nearly two years later as Boer units fought on, using mostly guerrilla tactics.

"The Colonial Office last night issued the following announcement – 'Very numerous applications having been received at the Colonial Office in connection with the recent unauthorised announcement as to employment on the Transvaal and Orange River Colony railways, it is desirable to state that the director of military railways in South Africa only desires to obtain about one hundred men from this country, and that at his request arrangements have already been made with the leading railway companies to recommend suitable candidates from their staffs. There is at present no prospect of employment for any persons not so recommended, and consequently no direct applications to the Colonial Office can be ascertained'." (*Belfast News-Letter,* Saturday 6th October 1900)

(to be continued)



The line between Netley station and Netley hospital was opened in April 1900 and the photograph shows the approach to the hospital. On the day that Queen Victoria visited wounded and sick troops in the hospital, the length of the single line was patrolled by men of the 4th Battalion Lincolnshire Regiment. (Author's Collection)

No.86 032 was working 6M79, the 21.05 Mossend–Bescot Speedlink, on the day of the accident described in the text. It is seen here at Euston in 1983. (Colour-Rail.com 260030)

LIGHTS OUT

GREG MORSE considers the lessons from the collision at Wigan North Western in February 1984.

When Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* appeared in 1949, its vision of a grey, post-nuclear world of lies made many fear for the future. Away from the world of politics, though, the real-life '84 presented a world where change had clearly come more slowly than feared – Mini Metros zipped past Vauxhall Vivas and Riley Kestrels, teenagers zipped up skinny jeans while Mum donned her flares and Madonna became a 'Material Girl' as new John Lennon and King Crimson albums hit the racks at Our Price.

It was the same on the railway, where British Rail Class 58s hauled freights alongside double-headed Class 25s and the High Speed Train network spread as ageing Class 501s electric units went on working out of Broad Street (at least for a little while longer). Practices and procedures also reflected this mixture of old and new, the latter taking time to replace the former – sometimes never quite doing so. Signalling was a good example, with its mix of nineteenth-century semaphores, 1930s colour light signals, 1960s multi-aspects and 1980s radio electric token block equipment. The humble oil lamp was another. These red-faced beacons had long covered the tail ends of trains, providing vital proof that they were complete. But an accident at Wigan North Western on 3rd February 1984 would help put them out for good.

It all started with a points failure. At a place like Wigan, where lines flow into a variety of routes, an alternative is usually possible. This time, the signaller at Warrington Power Box was unable to let the locomotive off a Manchester Victoria–Liverpool 'parcels' complete its run-round. It idled at WN49 signal while he maintained WN44 at danger to protect the points by stopping a Glasgow–Dudley Freightliner, which was gaining on the station fast.

In the cab of Class 86 No.86 039 Driver Spencer reached for the brake when he saw the 'double yellow' ahead. His train of ten bogie flats, double-headed with No.87 030, had swished through the night with ease since he'd taken over at Carlisle. He braked harder as the single yellow of WN11 came into view and brought the train to a gliding stand at WN44. Beneath a rainy, cloud-covered sky, he opened the cab door and climbed down to call in from the signal post telephone. As he stood in the darkness, he was given the news about the points. Nothing for it but to climb back into the cab and wait for something to happen. Around seven minutes later, something did…

Waiting at WN11 by now was 6M79, the 21.05 Mossend–Bescot Speedlink, headed by No.86 032. The signalman had told its crew about the points problem too but, after putting the phone down, decided to call it on to let a Glasgow–Euston sleeper pass on the down passenger loop. He duly cleared the position light signal (PLS) on WN11, allowing its two white lights to shine beneath the red glow of the main aspect.

In response the driver, Bernard Leonard, eased No.'032's main controller. Unfortunately, the signaller hadn't told him that the section ahead was occupied, thinking the PLS would do the job (it was in the Rules, after all). Leonard notched up a little more as the train edged closer to Wigan station, whose florescent lights cast their beams along the platforms. Sadly, their reach extended neither to the line, nor the empty flatbed at the rear of the Freightliner, which tore into the cab as the Speedlink struck it at around 12mph.

The 60-year-old Leonard was killed instantaneously. His 29-year-old guard, fellow Crewe man Jim Young, was badly injured and pinned to the roof of the cab by the sharp angles of tangled metal. It was 02.14.

At one stage, twenty firefighters were on the scene, grappling with cutting and lifting gear in appalling weather as they fought to free Young and release the body of his mate. A team from Wigan's Royal Albert Edward Infirmary set up drips and administered painkillers; rescuers chatted to keep Young's spirits up as he fought against the pain. He responded bravely at first, but became incoherent and later lost consciousness. There was no room to get resuscitation equipment inside the cab, so fire and ambulance crew crawled in and took turns to administer 'mouth-to-mouth'. Sadly, Young lost his battle at 04.25. It took just over another hour to cut his body free and remove it from the wreckage.

N. G. Williamson, the Traction and Rolling Stock Inspector at Manchester, arrived at around 07.00. On examining No.86 032, he found that the rear wagon of the Freightliner had penetrated its cab as far as the bulkhead behind the draught screen. The remains of a tail lamp were still on the bracket over the buffer beam. Although the locomotive's air brake appeared to be 'off' and the automatic train brake was in the emergency position, Williamson couldn't

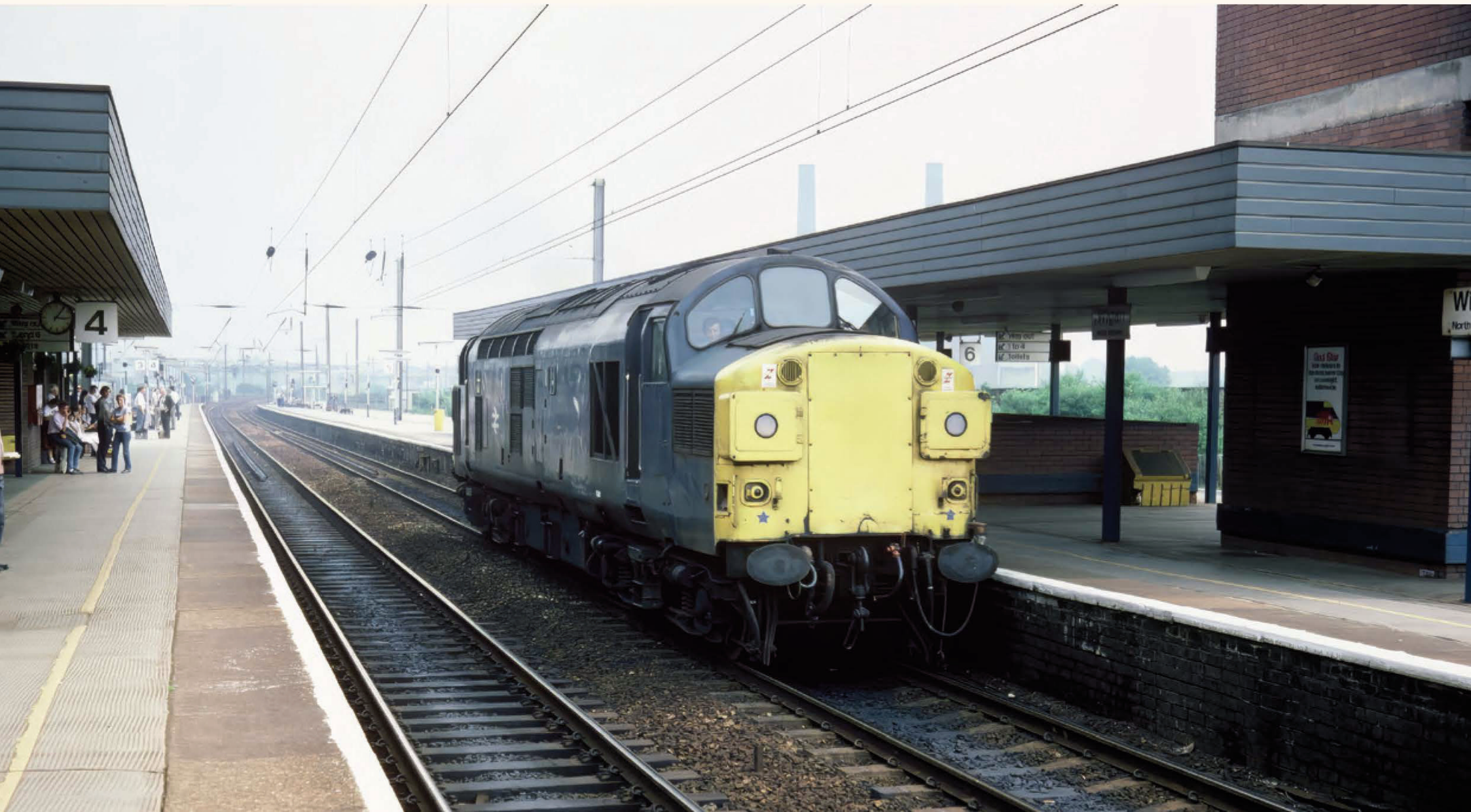
Leading the Glasgow–Dudley Freightliner struck in rear at Wigan was No.86 039, seen here at Crewe Works on 29th June 1986. (Colour-Rail.com 268309)

be sure that the handles hadn't been moved during the rescue operation. However, the camshaft motor was in Position 3 and the rails and wheels bore no signs that heavy braking had taken place. He deduced that Leonard must have applied the brakes right at the moment of impact.

A formal inquiry was conducted on behalf of the Railway Inspectorate by J. H. Seager, from the Ministry of Transport. Williamson provided key evidence, but Seager also interviewed most of the staff who were either involved with, or witnessed, the incident. The guard (who had been riding in the rear cab of No.86 032) confirmed Williamson's view by recounting that, after waiting at WN11 signal for about five minutes and then drawing slowly forward, he felt no brake application before the collision came.

The signaller had thought permissive working still applied for all trains on the platform lines at the time of the accident, but in fact the facility had been withdrawn for freight services on 6th June 1981. When he inadvertently broke this local rule and allowed the Speedlink on to the section occupied by the Freightliner, "the conditions that led to the collision were established". Driver Leonard might have expected another train in the section ahead, given the 'white lights' he received at WN11, "but, before condemning him" wrote Seager "it is necessary to consider […] the circumstances prevailing at the time".

Seager knew that the signalman had made a mistake, knew the driver had too. But there was something else, something he had to see for himself. As the Freightliner was waiting at WN44, the station pilot



No.37 030 at Wigan North Western on 16th June 1986, showing how the station looked at the time of the accident. (John E. Henderson/Colour-Rail.com 282619)

Working the stricken Freightliner with No.86 039 was No.87 030, captured at Crewe on 2nd August 1985.
(C. Tretheway/Colour-Rail.com 287622)

had entered Platform 3 to pick up a van. Its driver noticed that the Freightliner's tail lamp was out. After hooking on, he asked the shunter on duty to tell the Station Supervisor, adding that he'd relight it on his way back. But as the Class 08 hauled the van back out of the platform, the Speedlink passed by.

The shunter told Seager that he hadn't been able to "distinguish the train in the darkness" when told about the tail lamp. This had to be checked, so BR arranged for a test train identical to the one involved in the accident to be put at Seager's disposal. On a clear, moonless night, the formation was brought to stand at WN44. Looking towards it from the well-lit station platform, Seager was able to see the tail lamp easily. When the lamp was removed from its bracket, however, "it was quite impossible to see the rear unladen vehicle, the full height box container on the next wagon or the remainder of the train". All he could make out was a very slight, and virtually unrecognisable, reflection from the lower container, which had a clean, shiny finish. It was only when he moved to around 25 metres beyond the platform ramp ("or a little under 70m from the rear of the train") that he was able to discern the full-height container and the buffers of the rear wagon. He had found his answer. "I have no doubt" he concluded "that the driver of the Speedlink train could not possibly have seen the Freightliner train any sooner and, when account is taken of the fact that he was viewing the scene through a wet windscreen, the possibility that the rear container of the train was not as shiny as the one I saw and that his eyes would take a few moments to adjust from the well-lit area of the station to the darkness beyond it, I do not think he would have become aware of the Freightliner train until he was nearly upon it."

Seager realised that, while Leonard should have indeed been prepared to stop short of an obstruction (having been called on from WN11 signal), he was "entitled to expect a train standing on the main line to be exhibiting a tail lamp".

In 1971 BR had ordered 1,000 battery-powered 'Bardic' lamps for specific use on trains carrying flammable liquids and those – like Freightliners – that ran to regular schedules (as their movement and recharging could be properly controlled). BR also hoped they'd be more economical than oil lamps in the long term. This proved to be wrong and, as a result, lamps that got lost or damaged were not replaced. Indeed, their numbers had fallen so low by 1983 that their use on Freightliners was no longer mandatory.

In the five years leading up to Wigan, there had been two other collisions reported to the Railway Inspectorate involving the failure of a tail lamp on the rear of a container train. That said, there was no evidence to suggest that oil lamps were unreliable on these trains, even when the last vehicle was unladen and thus subjected to severe buffeting by the wind. Freightliner, a wholly owned subsidiary of BR since 1978, noted that they were "generally dependable provided they were filled and trimmed correctly", adding that its flatbeds had originally been fitted with draught shields. These, however, were found to foul the 'Bardic' lamps and, as a result, many had been either distorted or removed.

By this time, though, BR had been testing four new designs, each of which emitted a more economical flashing light. One, developed by the Railway Technical Centre at Derby, featured LEDs and had the advantage of a twelve-month battery life – a significant improvement on the other three. BR intended to replace all oil tail lamps with electric lamps over the following two or three years. Seager urged the company to bring its tests to a speedy conclusion and recommended that the 'Derby' lamp be implemented "as soon as practicable" (with priority given to Freightliner services). As a result, blinking electric tail lamps were introduced in 1986. Yet the story wasn't quite over.

At 21.30 on 27th February 1989 a freight train struck the rear of another, stationary, formation during permissive working at Warrington. The driver of the moving train and a rolling stock technician riding in the cab were both killed. The investigation revealed that the battery-powered tail lamp on the stationary train had not been working. While noting its superiority over the older oil lamp, the lamp had "a number of defects of which the most serious concerned the female connection from the lamp to the male connection of the battery". At certain positions, "contact was broken and the tail light was extinguished". When examined in detail, "the female connection did not conform [to British Standards]". As a result

British Rail redesigned the lamps so that the components fitted to their printed circuit boards were encapsulated so that they could easily become detached.

The mid-1980s version of BR was telling television audiences and newspaper readers that it was 'getting there'. While perhaps a poor substitute for 'This is the Age of the Train', from a safety point of view it perhaps had some validity. In February 1984 many were starting to believe that accidents on the scale of Harrow & Wealdstone (1952, 112 fatalities) and Hither Green (1967, 49 fatalities) were part of a fading past. Yet Wigan was to be the first of five fatal accidents involving trains that year. The worst came on 30th July, when a push-pull train running in push formation struck a cow on the line near Polmont (see *Backtrack*, February 2013). Thirteen people lost their lives. Ahead lay a SPAD and collision at Colwich Junction (1986, one fatality), a level crossing collision at Lockington (1986, nine fatalities), a bridge collapse at Glanrhyd (1987, four fatalities), a multi-train collision at Clapham (1988, 35 fatalities), two more SPAD and collision incidents at Purley (1989, five fatalities) and Bellgrove Junction (1989, two fatalities) and of course Warrington itself (1989, two fatalities).

Clapham had come on 12th December 1988. The public inquiry into the accident, which also looked at the issues arising from Purley and Bellgrove, revealed long 'causal chains' that involved front line errors, errors of supervision, management and a lack of resource. The theme that links all these incidents – Wigan and Warrington too – is change. And the problems of changing something, whether this be our signalling systems, track formations, organisational structure, or the design of a tail lamp, are still with us.

Thanks to my RSSB colleagues Marcus Dacre and Robert Sigrist for providing the statistical context used in this article.

Permissive Working

Under permissive working, trains are allowed to proceed with caution into a block section, signal section or dead-end platform line already occupied by another train.

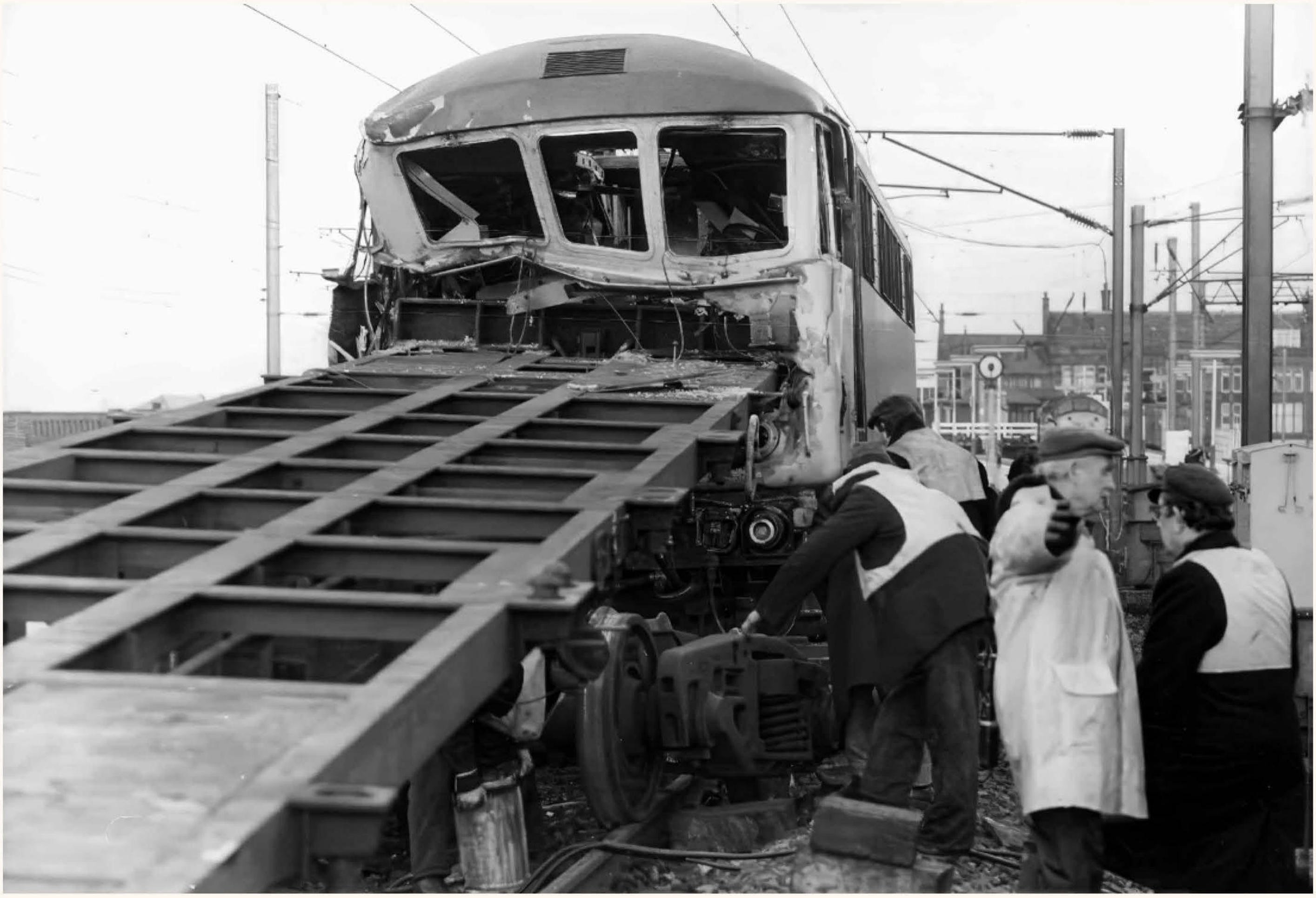
Permissive moves are signalled by bringing a train to a stand (or almost to a stand) at a red protecting signal and then 'calling it on' by illuminating the position light signal (or semaphore subsidiary signal) associated with it. The driver must then drive 'on sight' and be prepared to stop short of any obstruction.

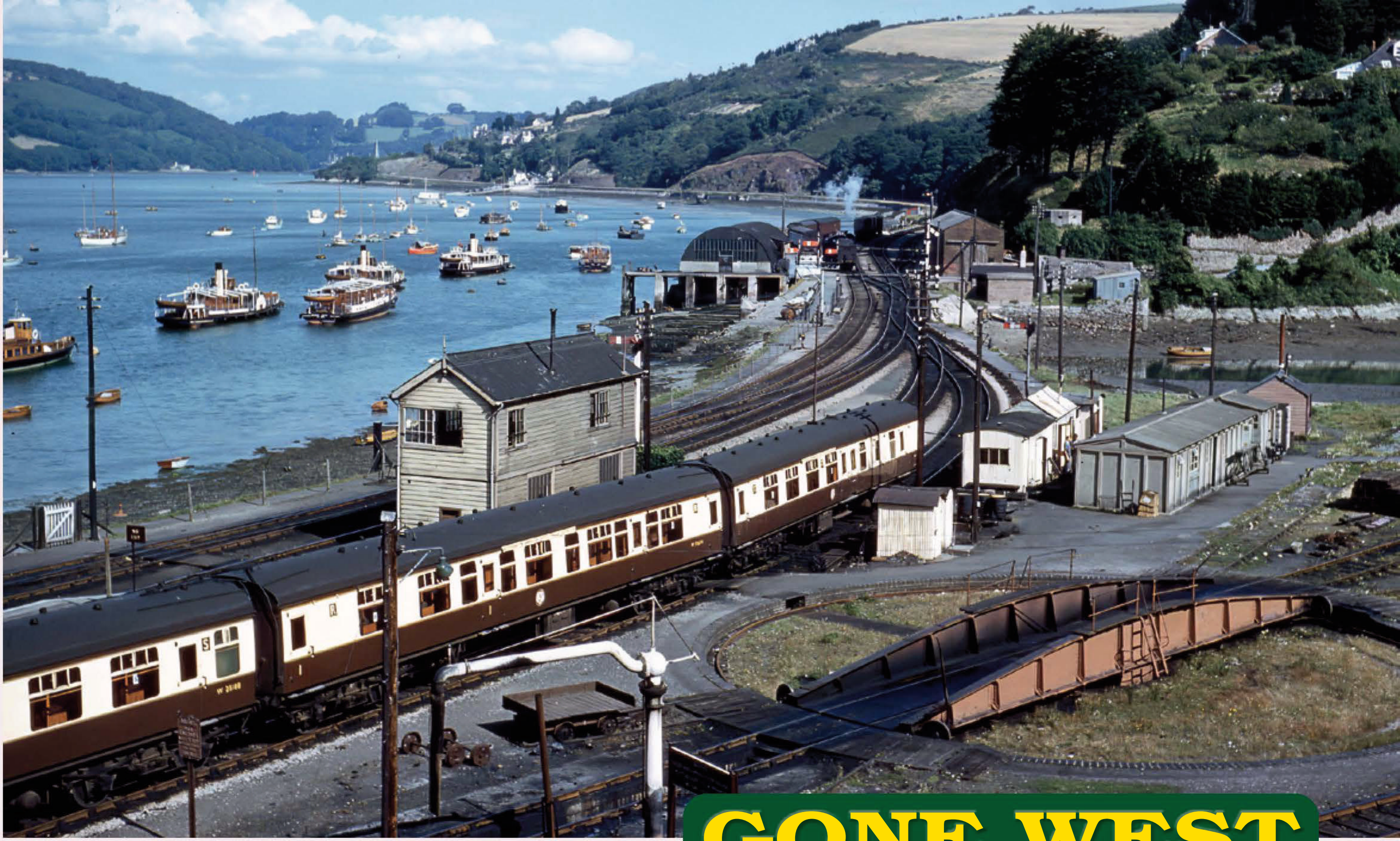
A shunting move can also be allowed to enter a portion of line that is already occupied, even though permissive working is not authorised, providing this is for the purpose of attaching, detaching or removing vehicles.

1984 in context	
Workforce fatalities.	25
Public fatalities	339
Passenger fatalities	39
No. of fatal train accidents	5

Source: RSSB

The clear-up and investigation operations are under way after the accident at Wigan North Western on 3rd February 1984. The damage to No.86 032, which struck the rear of a Freightliner, is clear. The driver and his assistant were both killed. (Paul Lewis/Asssociated Newspaper)



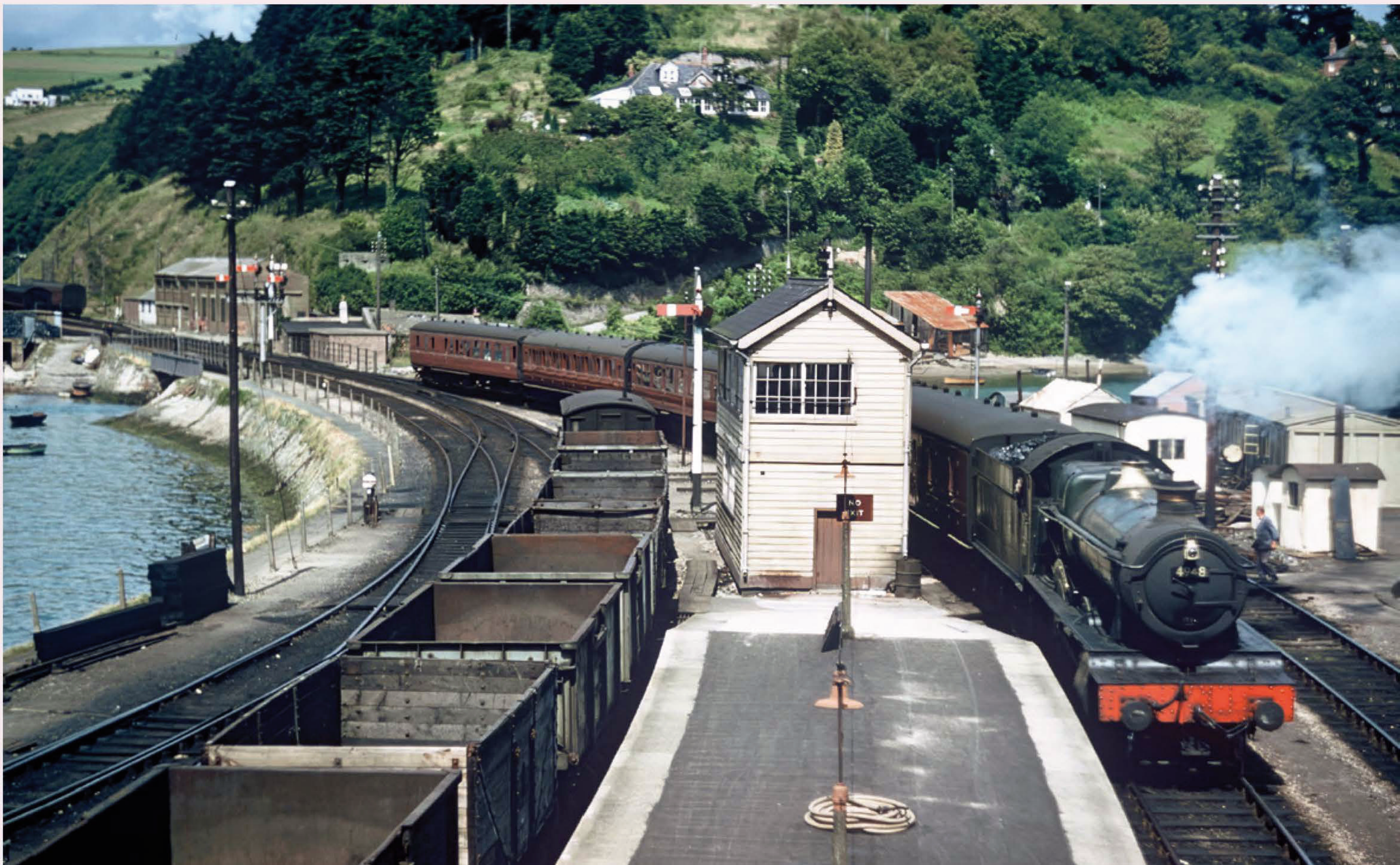


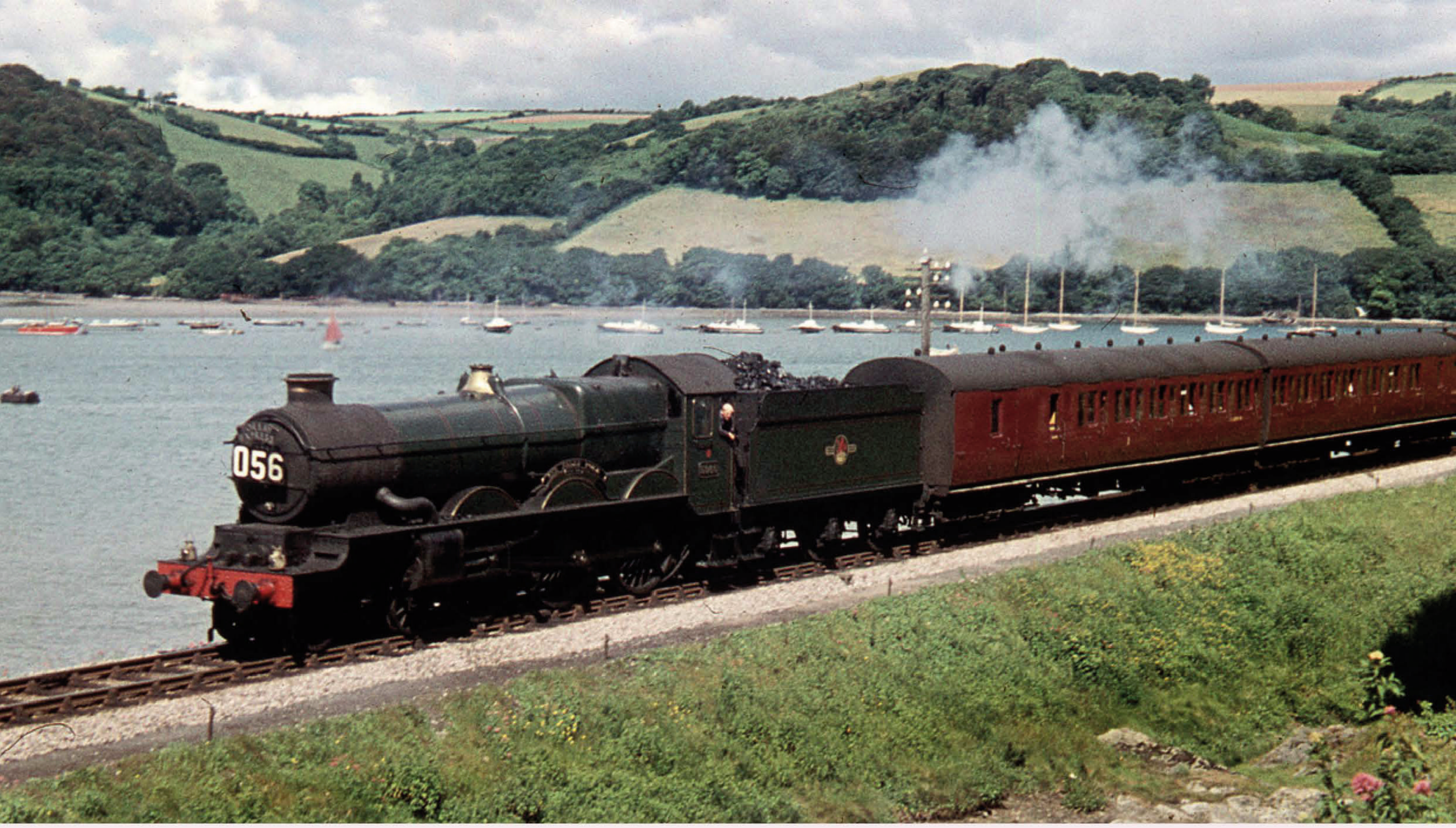
The terminus at Kingswear was fitted into a tight space on the banks of the river and consisted of no more than an island platform. Space was nevertheless found for a locomotive turntable and servicing siding. This scene on 1st September 1959 shows a rake of smart chocolate and cream carriages in the station, presumably the stock of the 'Torbay Express' through train from Paddington, with an abundance of craft of all sizes moored in the river. (Colour-Rail.com 103908)

GWR 'Hall' 4-6-0 No.4948 *Northwick Hall* runs into Kingswear with a local service during the summer of 1958, finding the opposite side of the island platform unusually occupied by empty wagons awaiting the opportunity to be shunted. The GWR had established a 'station' at Dartmouth but it was reached only by the ferries crossing the estuary from Kingswear. (Colour-Rail.com 320982)

GONE WEST

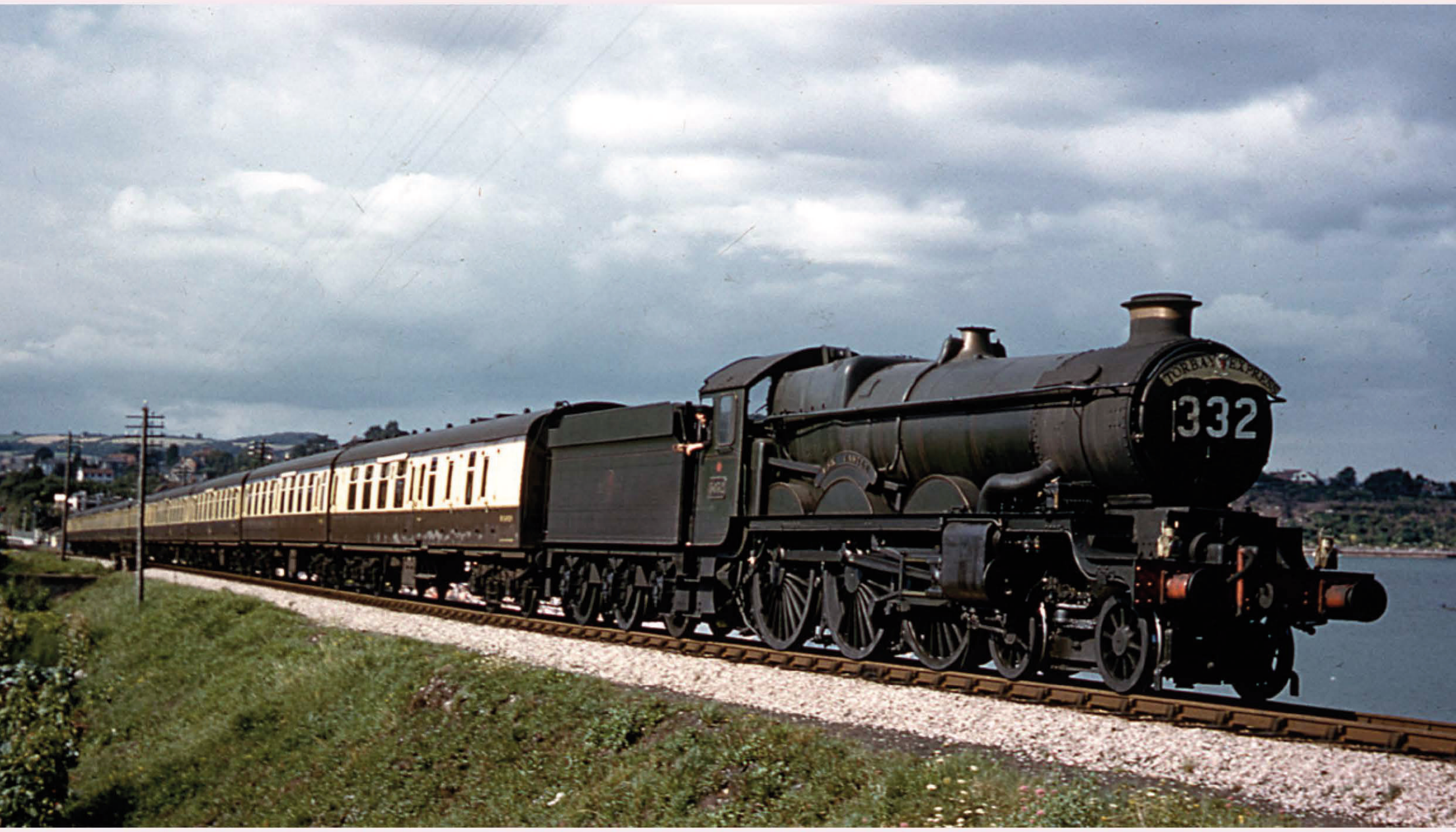
Summer is approaching – and the holiday traffic on the Great Western Railway main line to the West of England has passed into legend. From Aller Junction, south of Newton Abbot, a branch headed off to serve Torquay and Paignton and from there it was extended in 1864 to a terminus at Kingswear. There the station adjoined the ferry stage from where passengers could cross the River Dart to Dartmouth. 'Branch line' it may have been but in the peak of summer it was visited by through coaches and indeed through trains from far distant London and the north. Since 1973 the Paignton–Kingswear section has been operated by the Paignton and Dartmouth Steam Railway.

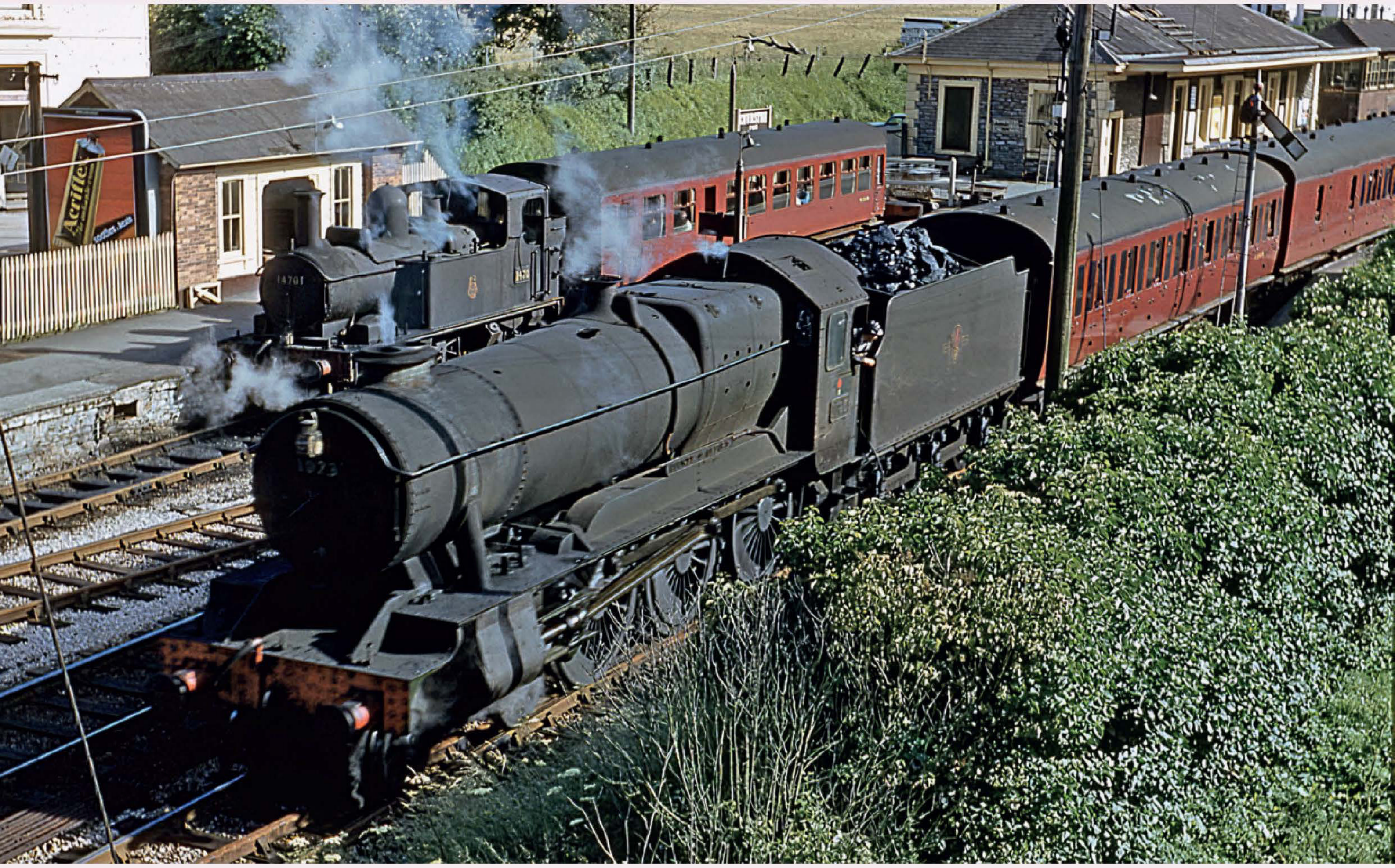




ABOVE: **As a result of GWR infrastructure improvements in the 1930s to enable better handling of the heavy summer traffic, the Kingswear branch could accommodate any of the company's motive power up to, and occasionally including, 'Kings'. 'Castles' were frequently seen and No.5066 *Sir Felix Pole* strolls easily alongside the estuary approaching Kingswear on 30th June 1959. It is sporting the 'Torbay Express' headboard and reporting number but the non-corridor compartment stock suggests this is only a local from Newton Abbot with No.5066 being sent to Kingswear on this ready bedecked for working the 'Torbay' later on its up departure for London.**
(D. B. Swale/Colour-Rail.com 324707)

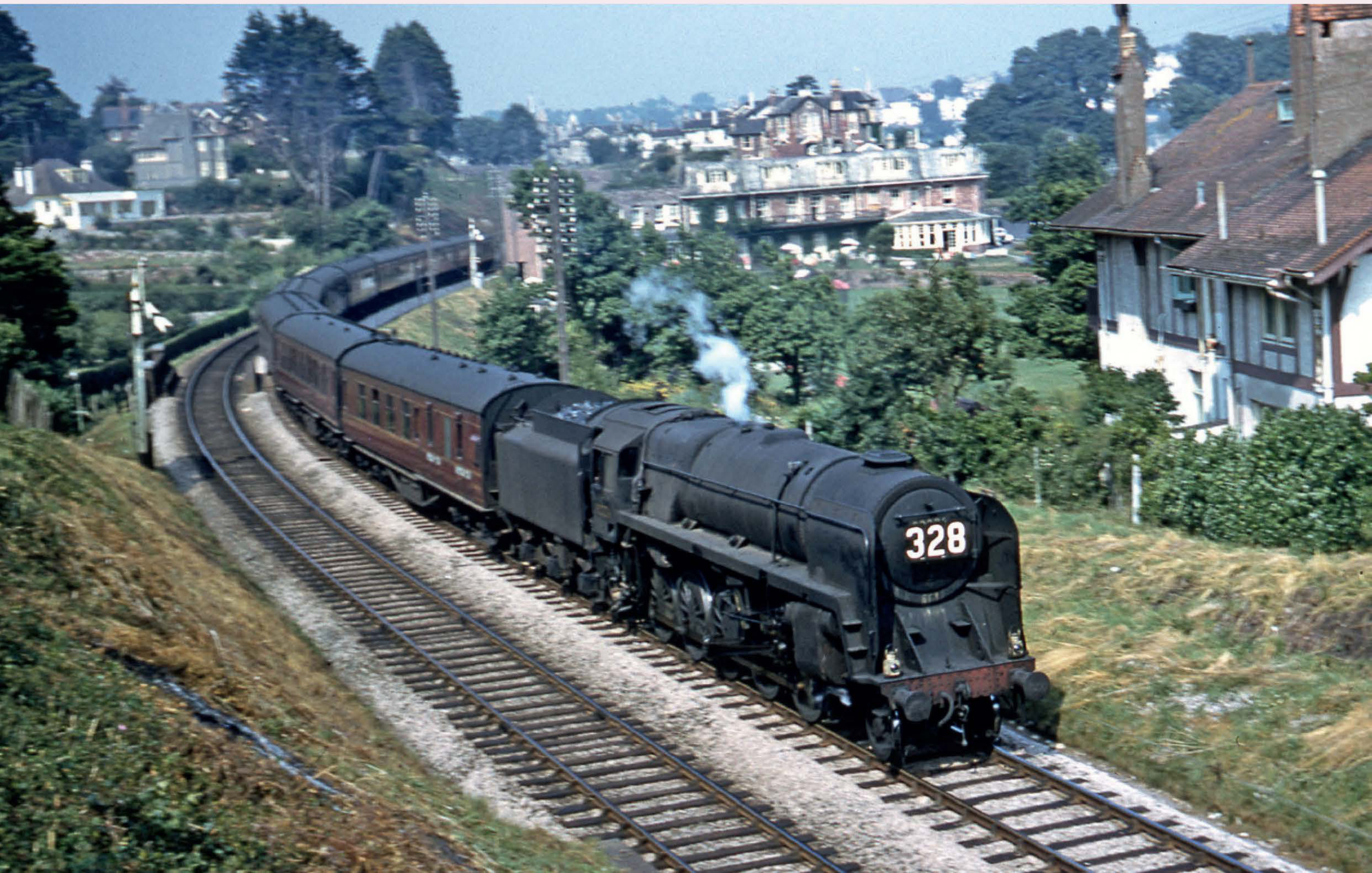
BELOW: **The 'Torbay Express', with a restaurant car, left Paddington at 12 noon, first stop Exeter then Torquay, Paignton, Churston and Kingswear. No.5032 *Usk Castle* passes Goodrington on 16th August 1959, with the background waters of Tor Bay surely now pacifying any fractious young "are we nearly there yet?" travellers. The 'Express' ran year-round, on Sundays as well in the summer, leaving Kingswear at 11.25. On summer Saturdays Seat Regulation Tickets (at no extra charge) were required by passengers to ensure no more tickets were issued than there were seats available (yes!); specific seat reservations were also available for an extra fee.**
(Colour-Rail.com 325008)

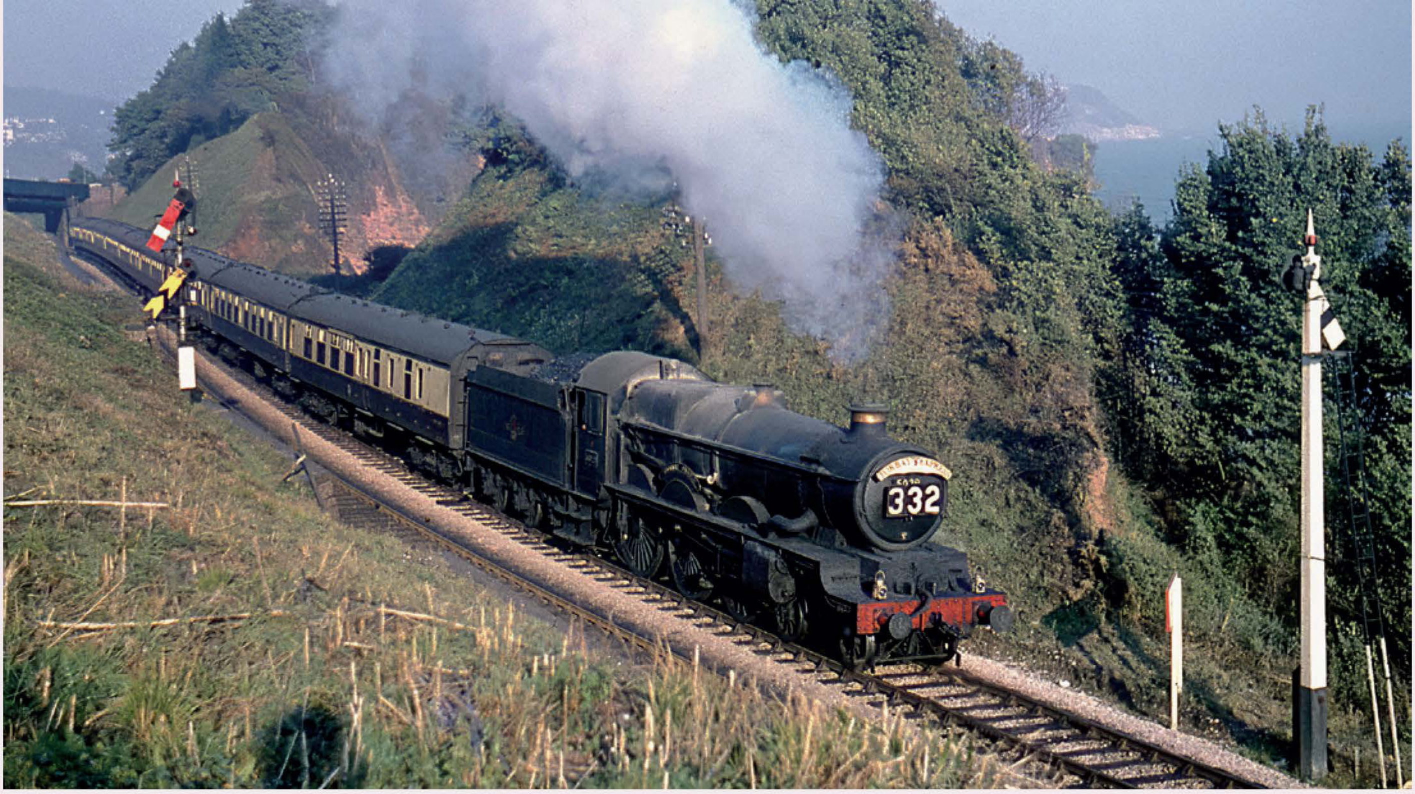




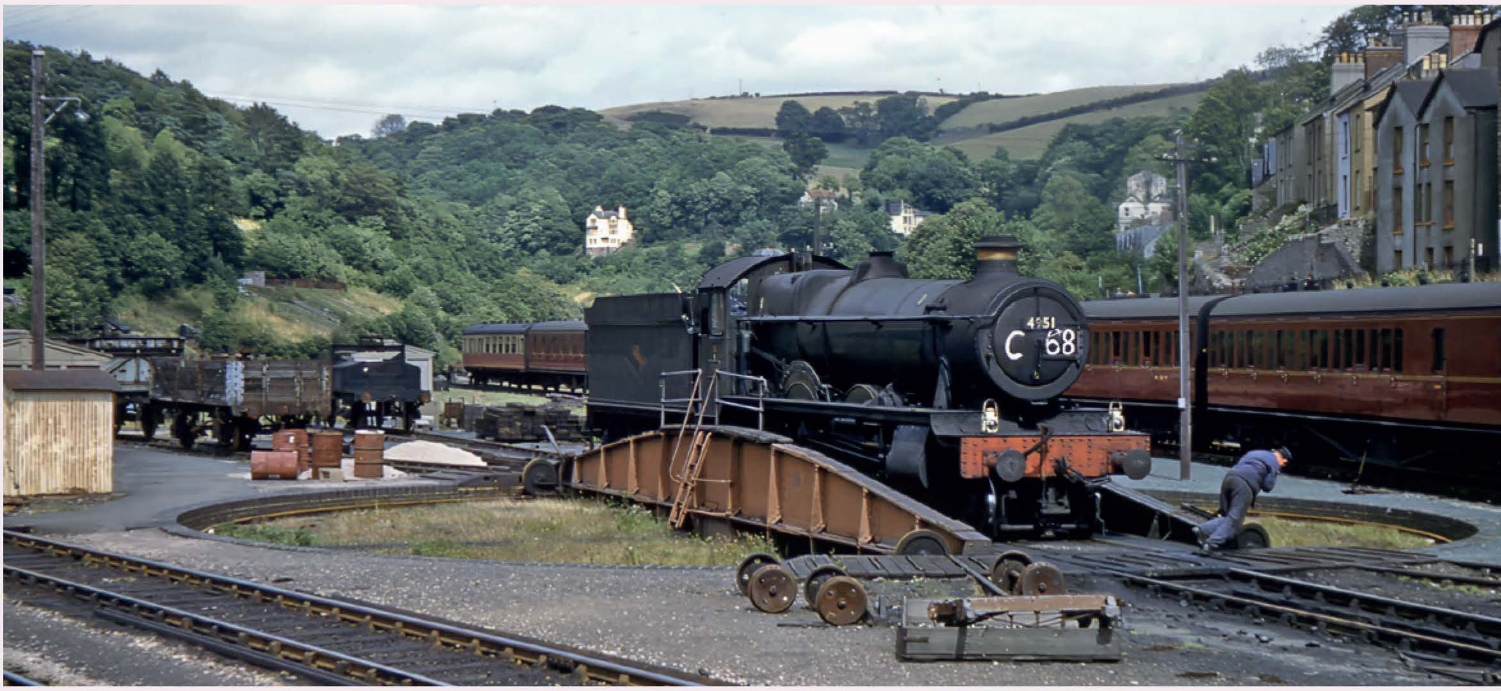
ABOVE: **Churston was the junction for the two-mile branch to Brixham and here GWR '14XX' 04-2T No.1470 is waiting for its moment with the auto-trailer, while 'County' 4-6-0 No.1023 *County of Oxford* goes on its way towards Paignton after depositing any connecting passengers. The Brixham branch was closed on 13th May 1963.** (Colour-Rail.com 320942)

BELOW: **If a 'Castle' or even a 'King' wasn't to be had, a BR 9F 2-10-0 could be called upon! On the outskirts of Torquay No.92226 is being given an outing on a summer express passenger duty – and tackling the lengthy train with customary competence.** (Colour-Rail.com 325003)

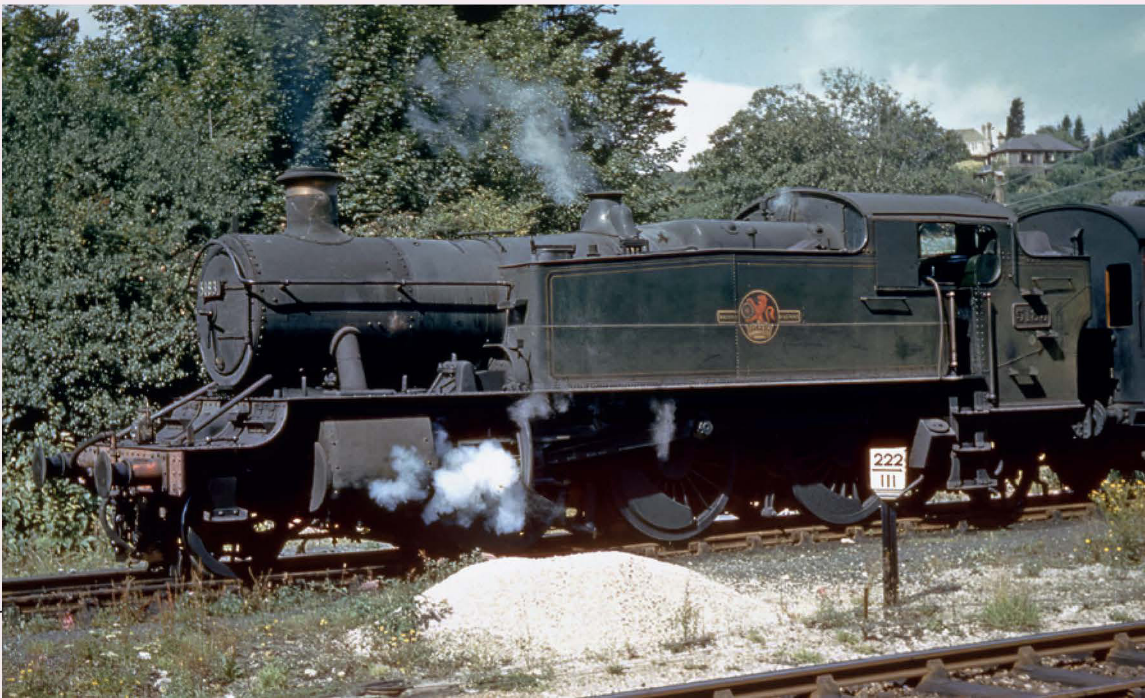




ABOVE: **With Western lower quadrants signalling 'line clear' in both directions, No.5023 *Brecon Castle* leads the down 'Torbay Express' on the last stage of long journey to Kingswear at Goodrington.** (Colour-Rail.com 35002)



ABOVE: **Having reached Kingswear, No.4951 *Pendeford Hall* has to be turned for the journey back to Newton Abbot and is bring propelled round in the traditional way on 5th August 1961.** (G. Parry Collection/Colour Rail.com 313203)



RIGHT: **Of course, it wasn't all about the big engines. '51XX' 2-6-2T No.5183 pauses from shunting in the extensive carriage sidings at Goodrington, south of Paignton, on 16th August 1958. The milepost denotes 222 miles (and three-quarters) from Paddington, measured by the original GWR main line via Bristol.** (Colour-Rail.com 322357)

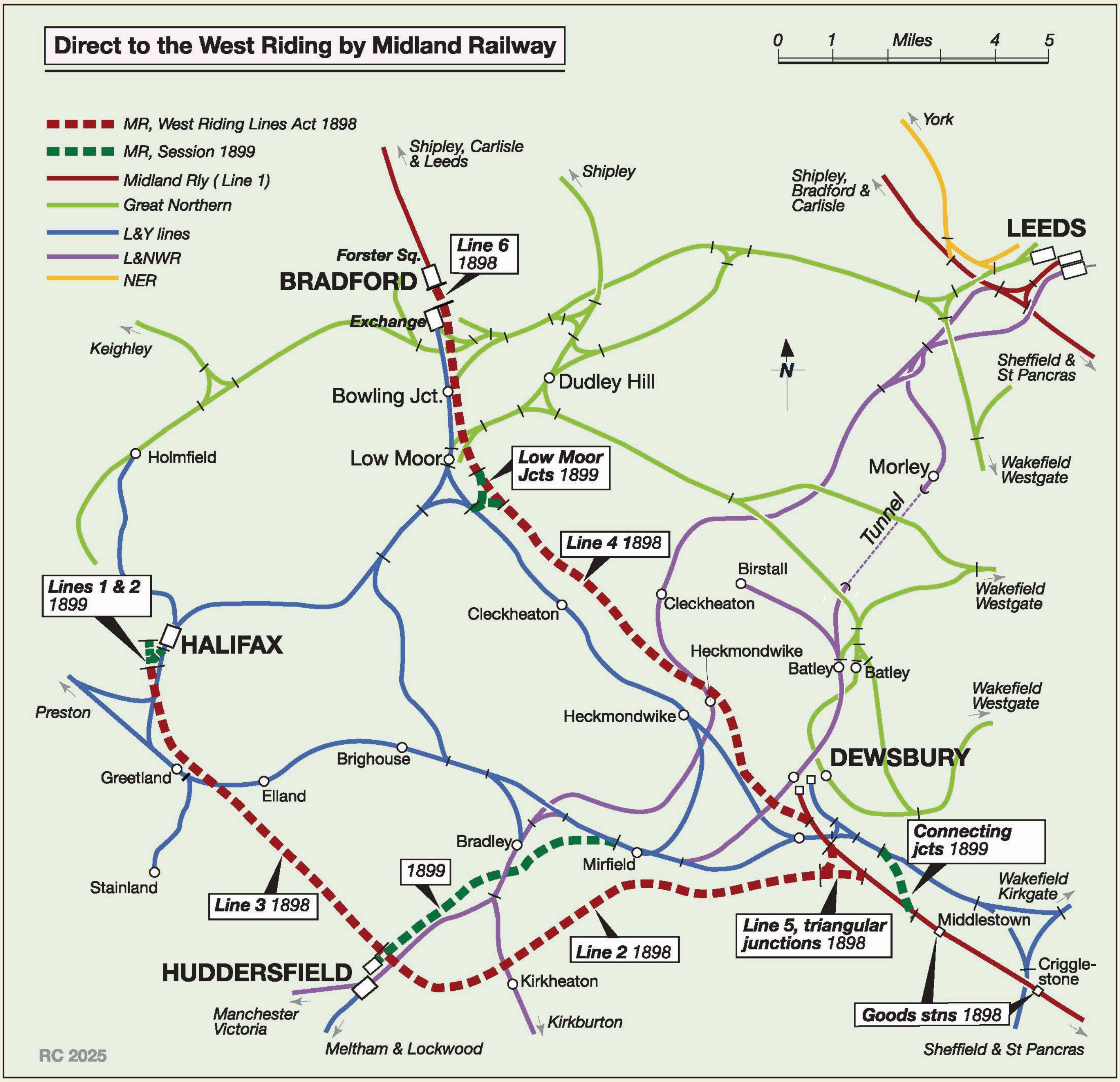
MISPLACED MIDLAND MAGNIFICENCE

BY RICHARD LEE

In 1958, on the Thornhill–Royston line, a Blackpool–Sheffield working ascends to Middlestown Junction from Thornhill. The 'main line' in the centre was planned to go to Bradford, but terminated at Dewsbury Savile Town, here being used for wagon storage. The line to the left dived under middle tracks to form a flying junction with the ex-LYR Calder Valley line. (Author's Collection)

Introduction

The Midland Railway's West Riding scheme of 1898 was probably the last major railway scheme within West Yorkshire and represented the culmination of many previous schemes to cross the area in a north–south direction. It was designed to tunnel across Bradford, under the existing Market Place station and so place the city on a fast, direct route to London southwards and the Midland's Settle–Carlisle to the north, thus making a new Anglo-Scottish route avoiding Leeds. Costing nearly £300 million in today's prices, it also included a branch to Halifax via Huddersfield linking the two towns on a short direct line for the first time. This article considers how "a magnificent piece of work, the finest bit of railway ever constructed either in England or anywhere else, designed for the heaviest express traffic"[1] ended up


Direct to the West Riding by Midland Railway
0 1 Miles 4 5
MR, West Riding Lines Act 1898
MR, Session 1899
Midland Rly (Line 1)
Great Northern
L&Y lines
L&NWR
NER
Shipley, Carlisle & Leeds
Shipley
Shipley, Bradford & Carlisle
York
LEEDS
Line 6 1898
Forster Sq.
BRADFORD
Exchange
Keighley
Bowling Jct.
Dudley Hill
N
Sheffield & St Pancras
Holmfield
Low Moor
Low Moor Jcts 1899
Morley
Wakefield Westgate
Tunnel
Line 4 1898
Birstall
Lines 1 & 2 1899
HALIFAX
Cleckheaton
Cleckheaton
Wakefield Westgate
Heckmondwike
Batley
Batley
Preston
Heckmondwike
Wakefield Westgate
DEWSBURY
Brighouse
Greetland
Elland
Connecting jcts 1899
Bradley
Mirfield
Wakefield Kirkgate
Stainland
1899
Line 3 1898
Line 5, triangular junctions 1898
Middlestown
Line 2 1898
Criggle-stone
HUDDERSFIELD
Kirkheaton
Goods stns 1898
Manchester Victoria
Kirkburton
Meltham & Lockwood
Sheffield & St Pancras
RC 2025

Bradford Market Place (Forster Square from 1924) would have been drastically altered if either the tunnel or viaduct had gone ahead. Both would have crossed from the right of this picture, between the goods and passenger lines shown here, merging near the road bridge in the distance. (Author's Collection)

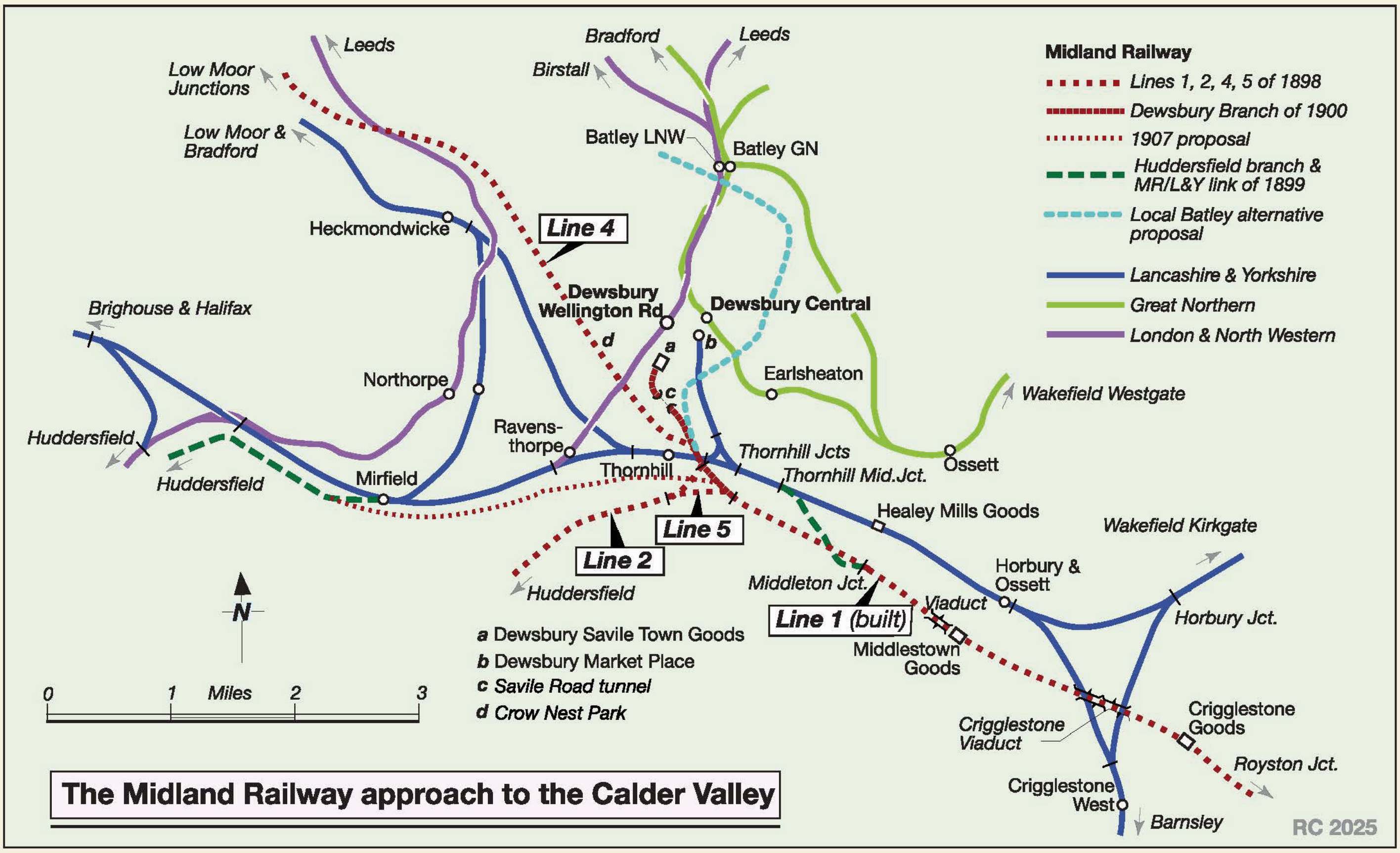
as just two short branches to Dewsbury and Huddersfield.

Background

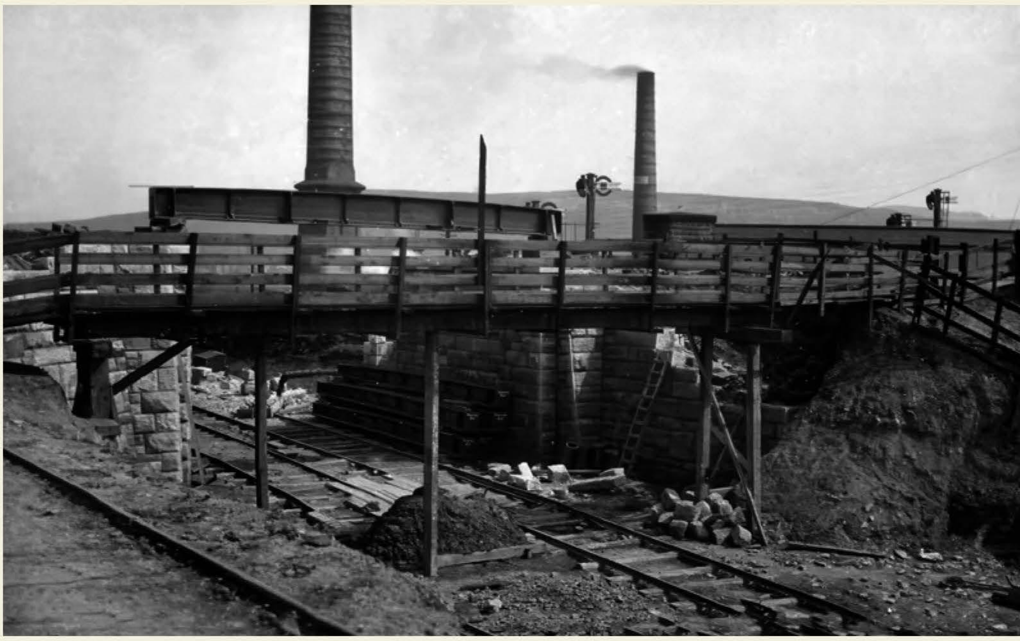
A deputation from a number of West Riding towns to the Midland Board at Derby in 1894 followed up the failed Bradford and South Yorkshire Railway of the previous year. This resulted in a speech to Midland shareholders in February, where the Chairman, Sir Ernest Paget, spoke at length about the need for a railway going in a north-westerly direction through the West Riding towards Bradford, Huddersfield, Halifax, Dewsbury and a number of smaller towns. Most schemes, with the exception of the South Yorkshire–Bradford plan of 1893, had envisaged a route from either the Great Northern or Midland lines south of Wakefield to run via Huddersfield and Halifax northward towards Keighley, so the new proposal was something of a surprise when announced.

West Riding scheme of 1898

In early October 1897, the company presented its West Riding scheme which envisaged a new line branching off the Midland main line at Royston just north of Barnsley to Bradford via Thornhill (just south of Dewsbury) and the Spen Valley, with a tunnel under Bradford city centre to join its north-facing Market Street station. This would create a new route from London to Scotland via Shipley, Keighley and the Settle–Carlisle line, avoiding Bradford's rival Leeds. It would cut the distance from London to Bradford by 11¼ miles and from London to Scotland by 5¾ miles whilst journey times would be improved by avoiding the necessity to reverse


Leeds
Low Moor Junctions
Low Moor & Bradford
Bradford
Birstall
Leeds
Batley LNW
Batley GN
Heckmondwicke
Line 4
Brighouse & Halifax
Dewsbury Wellington Rd
Dewsbury Central
d
a
b
c
Earlsheaton
Northorpe
Wakefield Westgate
Huddersfield
Huddersfield
Ravensthorpe
Mirfield
Thornhill
Thornhill Jcts
Thornhill Mid.Jct.
Ossett
Healey Mills Goods
Line 5
Line 2
Huddersfield
Middleton Jct.
Line 1 (built)
Viaduct
Horbury & Ossett
Wakefield Kirkgate
Horbury Jct.
Middlestown Goods
Crigglestone Viaduct
Crigglestone Goods
Royston Jct.
Crigglestone West
Barnsley
N
0
1
Miles
2
3
a Dewsbury Savile Town Goods
b Dewsbury Market Place
c Savile Road tunnel
d Crow Nest Park
Midland Railway
Lines 1, 2, 4, 5 of 1898
Dewsbury Branch of 1900
1907 proposal
Huddersfield branch & MR/L&Y link of 1899
Local Batley alternative proposal
Lancashire & Yorkshire
Great Northern
London & North Western
The Midland Railway approach to the Calder Valley
RC 2025

at Leeds and congestion in the area would be reduced. It also proposed a triangular junction at Thornhill with a branch to Huddersfield and Halifax via Elland, crossing the Colne at Huddersfield and the Calder at Elland by impressive viaducts in a north-south direction. The scheme also provided improved access to the cheaper high quality coals of the Barnsley coalfield, a significant benefit to the manufacturing district where local coal was of poor quality and becoming worked out. The total estimated cost of the work was £2,100,000, later revised to £2,698,884 (equating to £294,687,011 in today's prices using the Bank of England inflation calculator). News of the plans was leaked to the local press after meetings in Halifax and Huddersfield on Tuesday 5th October 1897 and news of the meetings was published the following day to some surprise in Bradford. It was later revealed that negotiations covering water rights and rating valuations had been carried out in secret for several weeks beforehand. "The Bradford authorities have complied with the desire of the Midland officials that the information should be kept private."[2] Under the Bill, the scheme was broken down into five lines, all planned for double track:



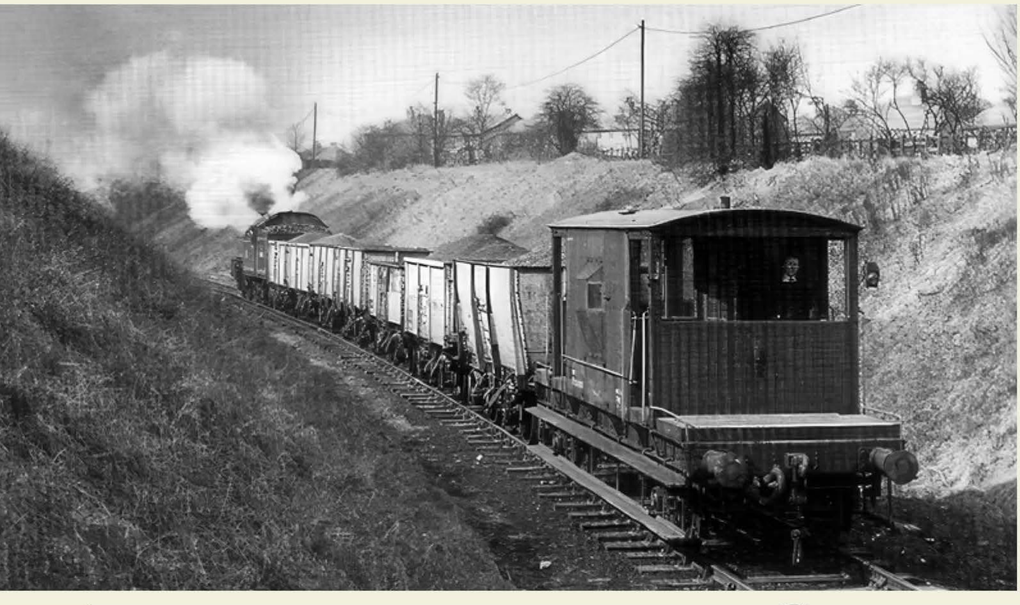
The construction of the Huddersfield branch was straightforward, the only major work being a fifteen-arch viaduct over the Colne at Bradley. Here, a bridge is under construction at Fieldhouse, on the outskirts of Huddersfield, adjacent to the LNWR main line and the Fieldhouse Fire Clay Works. This stretch of line closed with the construction of Red Doles Junction in 1923. (Huddersfield Exposed website)

Line No.1 (£326,039) – From a junction with the Midland main line just north of Royston, Barnsley, through Crigglestone and Middlestown to Thornhill, 8¼ miles in length, with one short tunnel and two viaducts, one of 24 arches across the Blacker Beck valley near Crigglestone and another of seventeen arches at Horbury Bridge. A three-span bridge was to cross the Calder & Hebble Navigation and Lancashire & Yorkshire lines between Middlestown and Thornhill.

Line No.2 (£543,069) – From Thornhill to Huddersfield, passing south of Kirkheaton, crossing the Kirkburton branch of the London & North Western Railway passing through Moldgreen and over Kilner Bank on a viaduct near Messrs. Reed Holliday's works before reaching Huddersfield at Newtown where a station was to be located on land purchased some 40 years previously for £70,000. The line would then proceed up Grimescar Valley tunnelling through the watershed at Ainley towards Elland.

Line No.3 (£530,819) – Huddersfield to Halifax. From the Ainleys it was to cross Elland in almost a straight line on a viaduct some 280 yards long, and at a height of about 88ft., with a station in the South Lane area. It would then cross the LYR near Dryclough before terminating in Halifax at Clare Hall, with the fields at Shaw Hill to be used as a goods yard. Officials explained that locating the station here would allow for the possibility of a northward extension on a viaduct, rather than undertaking expensive tunnelling works in the town centre.

The Midland line into Huddersfield was goods only and was never more than a quarter of a mile from the LYR/LNWR line. Here, a local coal train has just come off the ex-LNWR line at Red Doles Junction and is heading towards the terminus. Ashmere Grove can be seen in the background and the majority of the route has now been converted into the Birkby Bradley Greenway. (Author's Collection)



Line No.4 (£1,187,152) – Thornhill to Bradford. The line from Thornhill was to cut across the LNWR line and Huddersfield Road in Westown, Dewsbury, and run along the Spen Valley through Heckmondwike, Liversedge and Cleckheaton parallel with the existing LYR line to Low Moor. Then it was to pass through a series of cuttings before entering a tunnel running parallel with the Bowling Tunnel of the LYR. It would pass under the GN Leeds line and Bowling Dye Works at Ripleyville, then tunnel wide of the GN Goods Station on Wakefield Road, passing under the built-up area around Wakefield and Leeds Roads before proceeding under Forster Square. It would then run below the existing Midland station where a new station would be built underneath. The reduced cost of land purchase in the city centre was mitigated by the immense engineering works including the raising of the street level for five or six feet around Forster Square. The Bill included numerous clauses specifically to Bradford, protecting local authorities, private companies and neighbouring railways, especially regarding subsidence. It also covered the significant issue of rights to underground water supplies used by existing industry in the area, notably H. W. Ripley's Trustees as to water rights at Bowling Dyeworks and potential mishaps in the diversion of Bradford Beck.

Line No.5 (£24,986) was a triangular junction at Thornhill, where the Huddersfield and Halifax branch left the Bradford line. This would have been a major engineering work in itself, both the junction and approaches being almost entirely built on viaducts.

Line No. 6 (£86,819) was to be situated wholly in Bradford. Commencing with an underground end-on junction with the

A group of workers (and a dog!) is seen standing in the 'four foot' in front of Crigglestone signal box. All bar one man are wearing civilian work wear, whilst the remaining individual is wearing a MR cap and waistcoat, but has a non-uniform jacket on top. The bearded man front centre is wearing a bowler hat and is evidently the person in charge, whilst the young man alongside him may well be a clerk. (Midland Railway Study Centre)

proposed railway No.4 near Hall Ings, it was to terminate at a surface junction with the Midland Railway's goods lines between Manningham and Frizinghall. These were to be passed under to the right of the main line going north.

Reactions to the scheme

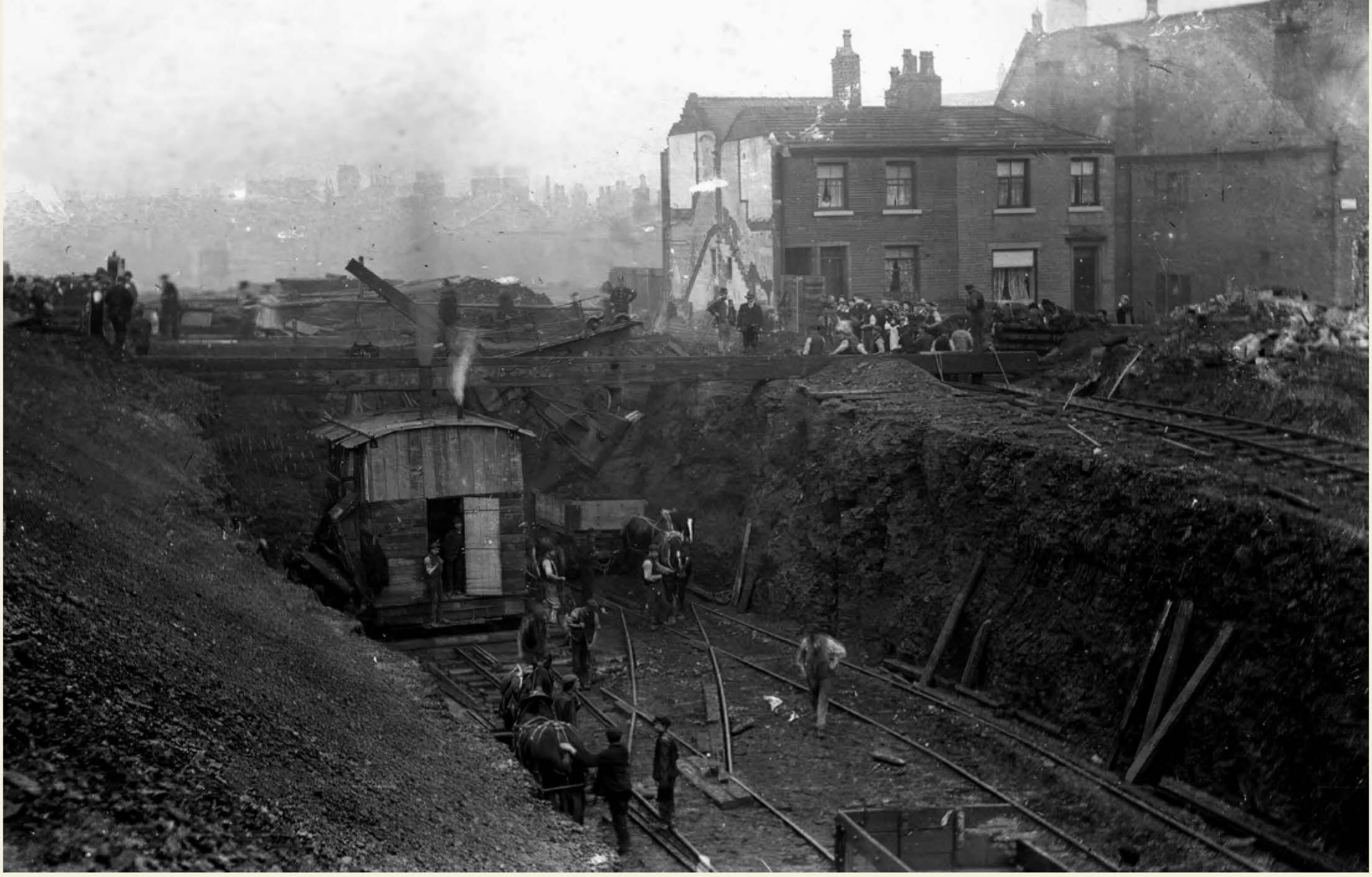
Unsurprisingly, support in Bradford was substantial, the *Bradford Daily Telegraph* noting that by its adoption Bradford would be placed on the Midland Company's shortest route from London, "a consideration that will be overwhelming with many businessmen and the public. On the whole it can hardly be doubted that the scheme will receive the degree of public support which its promoters desire."[3] When pressed as to whether Leeds or Bradford would now be on the main line, the Midland's Solicitor Mr. Beale replied that "Bradford would lie on 'a' main line, and that as the new route would be shorter than the old one, Bradford would get service equally as good as Leeds." A Leeds correspondent put it more bluntly: "It is to be hoped that the Midland Railway Company's latest scheme will be carefully watched, for no more deadly blow was ever aimed at the prestige Leeds, which, under this extension, will be relegated to a loop line, while Bradford, with little more than half its population, will enjoy, to the detriment of Leeds, all the advantages being on the main line."[4] Dewsbury savoured the prospect of a station on the Anglo-Scottish route, and the Town Council promptly adopted a resolution approving the scheme in principle, and expressing readiness to support and assist the company as far as possible. The Spen Valley towns were also all unanimous in their support.

The Yorkshire Post[5] commented that "The most curious thing about the scheme is that the Bradford people have reaped the chief fruit of the agitation at Huddersfield and Halifax for the extension of the Midland line to those places. As it is, Bradford has got the main line service, and Huddersfield and Halifax the terminal line. The result is a considerable disappointment for the latter places. They have got something, but it falls very far short of their hopes, and has put an end to all prospects of the line going north of Halifax."

The Huddersfield Daily Examiner[6] noted that "the joint determination of the two towns to have an improved railway service has finally decided the course of the Midland extension. We feel convinced that the impetus given to commerce and industry in Huddersfield and Halifax will lead to such satisfactory traffic remits that the question of the extension northwards will not long lie in abeyance after the new line has got into working order". The view of both towns was summed up in a Huddersfield Council resolution: "That this Council, though disappointed that the proposed Midland line between Royston and Halifax through Huddersfield is not at present to join the Midland main line north, is of the opinion is that the scheme will be of service to the Borough of Huddersfield,

Royston signal box. In starting the West Riding line just north of Royston, the Midland incurred the wrath of Barnsley, which had seen the Bradford–South Yorkshire scheme of 1893 promise to place the town on the direct line with a new central station. Royston and Notton station was opened in 1841 by the North Midland and rebuilt about a mile southward in 1900. (Midland Railway Study Centre)

ROYSTON JUNCTION

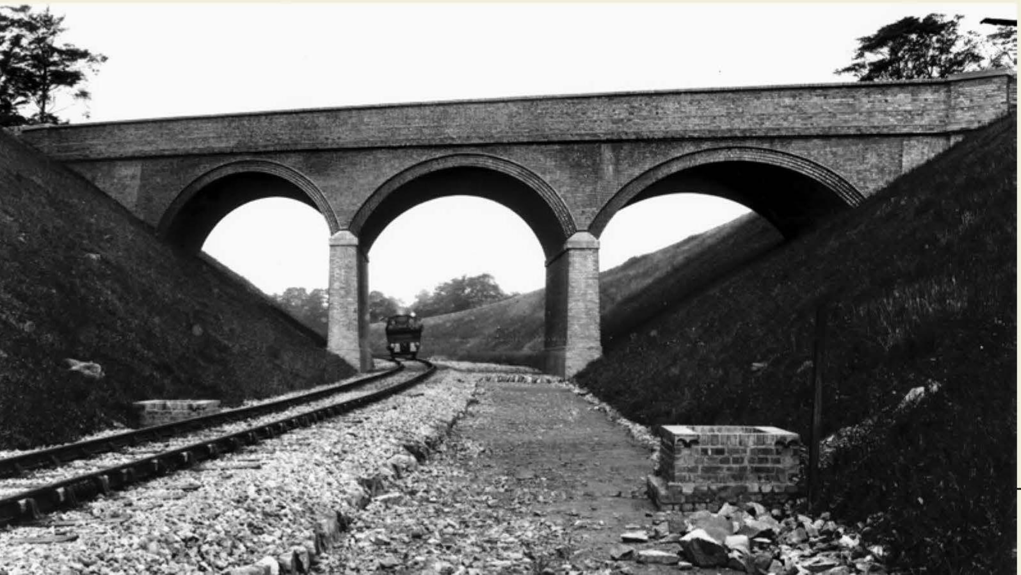


Huddersfield branch excavation. A small crowd watches the steam excavator at work, forming a cutting prior to bridge construction at Halifax Old Road near the junction of Clara Street at Hillhouse (looking eastwards). Does the presence of the police and officials (centre) indicate an incident, or celebration of the new bridge girder in place? One imagines the infrequent goods service provided little diversion from lessons for the pupils at St. John's School for Boys, Girls and Infants (right of picture)! (Midland Railway Study Centre)

and merits their approval and support.”[7]

The greatest and most organised opposition to the MR came from Batley where the reaction was influenced by the Bradford and South Yorkshire Railway's 1893 plan. “Batley's Need, the Midland's Opportunity,” exclaimed the *Batley Reporter*.[8] “Her people with one accord say ‘Come to Batley; we need the Midland Railway here; there is a fine scope for the company; we will put every facility in the way of your coming, and accord you material support when you come’.” An optimistic local proposal was to replace the Spen portion with a line from Walton via Ossett, Hanging Heaton, Batley, Birstall, Gomersal and Hunsworth. This was promptly dropped to maintain support from Dewsbury and the Spen Valley towns in favour of a loop line via Batley. This was to branch from the main line at Thornhill, east of the Dewsbury Gasworks, pass over the Great Northern and then tunnel under Wakefield Road to Hanging Heaton, passing over the LNWR and GNR lines and Bradford Road by viaducts to a new station, before rejoining the proposed line above Heckmondwike. *The Batley Reporter* injected a note of realism, stating “On the face of it the route is fraught with engineering difficulties, with the most extraordinary feature being the idea of carrying the line by a tall viaduct over the existing LNWR and GN lines near the Batley Station”.[9] Unsurprisingly the Midland quickly dismissed the proposal, writing to the Town Council on 8th November “it is impossible to carry the main line through Batley except at an enormous cost, and then only with gradients which would be far too great.”

Bridge No.3 (over Paul Lane) frames Hutchinson's (the contractors) Manning Wardle L Class saddle tank No.1632 on the Huddersfield branch just prior to completion and opening in 1910. The view is looking towards Huddersfield, on the Mirfield side of the viaduct, with Midland milepost 191¼ on the right. (Midland Railway Study Centre))



Withdrawal of the Huddersfield and Halifax line

Surprisingly there were few objections during the Committee stages, notably Fox's woollen mills in Dewsbury and Ripley's Dyeworks in Bradford. It then became clear that the Midland was withdrawing the Halifax and Huddersfield branch, having come to an agreement with the LYR over running powers and connecting lines. As the Midland Solicitor wrote to Huddersfield Council on 7th April 1898, “the arrangement with the L&Y has been concluded to-day, This involves the withdrawal from the Bill of railways 2, 3, and 5. The Midland Company's access to Huddersfield is to be over the L&Y lines, with independent stations and power to run their own trains and conduct their own service, but the detail of the route is not yet settled, as one or two schemes are under consideration. I can assure you that the Midland will be in no way dependent upon the L&Y. Nothing short of this would satisfy the Midland Board”. However, this did not satisfy local opinion, as summarised by the *Halifax Evening Courier*: “The more the action of the Midland Railway Company is considered in relation to the abandonment of the line to Huddersfield and Halifax the more it is condemned. At Huddersfield, feeling is very strong against the Company, for they have done the very thing they promised representative public men in that town should not be done. How mere running powers can be an adequate substitute from an independent line, free from entangling and compromising arrangements, is inconceivable.”[10]

As the *Yorkshire Observer* snootily

commented: "Bradford people can regard their own position on the Midland line as assured now that Huddersfield and Halifax are out of the way. The advice to Halifax and Huddersfield is to try to make the best of the altered arrangement. It seems possible that the people of Halifax and Huddersfield can be best served under the amended plan as they would have been had the original scheme."[11]

Full details of the amended plan emerged in November 1898. For Halifax this entailed a short connection from the projected Midland line by a triangular junction near Oakenshaw, joining the LYR south of Low Moor, and so giving running powers over the LYR to Halifax. Midland passenger trains would run into Halifax with the LYR having running powers to Bradford, Ilkley and Otley. Another short branch off the LYR would lead to a separate Midland goods station on the Shay estate to the south west of the town. Huddersfield was to have a separate Midland station on its land in St. John's Road, Newtown. From here, the line was planned to run eastwards down the Colne Valley, skirting the north side of the LNWR line and Hillhouse sidings to Deighton, where a bridge and viaduct would cross the LNWR, the canal and River Colne before skirting south east to a junction with the LYR just on the Huddersfield side of Mirfield station.

From Mirfield it was proposed to use the existing LYR Calder Valley line to Thornhill where it was to form a westward burrowing junction with the proposed Spen Valley main line, giving access to both Huddersfield and Brighouse, Elland and Halifax via the Calder Valley. *The Huddersfield Daily Chronicle* pointedly commented "Traffic at Mirfield station is already congested enough. It seems such a pity that after constructing nearly four miles of independent railway from Huddersfield to Mirfield the Midland Company should, for the sake of another 2½ miles of railway, become dependent upon running powers."[12]

A Bill was prepared in late 1898 and enacted the following year authorising the link lines from the West Riding line to the LYR at Low Moor, the branch from Mirfield to Newtown and the junction at Thornhill. In 1900 powers were obtained to construct a short branch line at Dewsbury, off the main line at Thornhill, and curving around the back of Savile cricket ground on the west bank of the Calder to end facing Savile Road. Minor revisions in an Act of 1903 included a new bridge costing £7,000 over the river to improve access to Dewsbury town centre. Contract No.1 for Royston to Crigglestone was let to Mr. Wills (of Price and Wills, contractors to the Midland's Heysham Docks scheme) at a cost of over £200,000 in October 1902. On 19th March 1903 some Midland directors visited the site to view progress, and by 1904 both the viaducts and tunnel were finished. The line from Royston to Dewsbury opened on Thursday 1st March 1906 with the first train arriving at 6.45am in Dewsbury without ceremony, just a few officials being present. The goods facilities occupied nearly twenty acres of land and two miles of sidings with an impressive goods shed covering an area of an acre and a half, and an adjacent brick storage shed 50 yards long. Despite much speculation and anticipation in the local press, there were no passenger facilities, these being under consideration at either Westown or Savile town – essentially either side of Huddersfield Road on the planned main line. Small goods stations also opened later at Crigglestone and Middlestown, both being provided with well-equipped goods sheds and warehouses. The section of the line between these two stations suffered regularly from subsidence, particularly from the Hartley Bank colliery at Netherton.

Delays and abandonment

The company applied for and obtained time extensions for the Act in 1901 and 1904, citing delays in compulsory purchases of land and property. A more significant consideration was that of water rights, which arose because the planned tunnel interfered with the water supply of Messrs. Ripley's Bowling Dyeworks and these were safeguarded by a clause in the Act of 1898. Arbitration hearings commenced in February 1900 with claims for the value of the land approximately £25,000 and for water rights and associated land being between £40,000 and £45,000. It was an issue that was to drag on for years. Comments by the Chairman at the half-yearly shareholder meeting in August 1904 suggested little likelihood of the company's new line being continued further than Dewsbury at that time. He stated that the Board has decided not to increase the expenditure of capital and no orders for new work of any kind have been given for the ensuing half-year. Again in February 1905 the Midland shareholders were told that it had not been possible to proceed further with the West Riding lines. Two months later a deputation from Bradford City Council to Derby learned that diminished returns and serious engineering difficulties in Bradford had led the Board to consider modifications to the authorised plan. The deputation gained the impression that there was a marked reluctance to undertake further work on the lines towards Bradford. In October the following year rumours circulated in the local press about the Midland abandoning the main line through Bradford and these were soon confirmed.

On 20th November 1906 the *Leeds Mercury* shared the startling announcement that the Midland Railway Company had finally abandoned its extension scheme, proclaiming "Bradford's railway isolation, postponement of the main line project, Midland company want more time, a diplomatic battle in view." *The Bradford Daily Telegraph* reported on the confusing situation that had rapidly emerged. Although the Midland was promoting a Bill for the abandonment of the scheme, it was similarly proposing another Bill (an Omnibus Bill) in which it sought a renewal of time for the construction of the line for three years and a repeal of the water clauses. "The inference the railway officials ask the public to draw is that the scheme is not being dropped. There is, however, such ambiguity in the procedure that it satisfies nobody in the district and the local authorities are up in arms about what they regard as a breach of faith by the Railway Company."[13]

In an elegant but pointed local government retort, the Council sent the following letter to the Midland:-

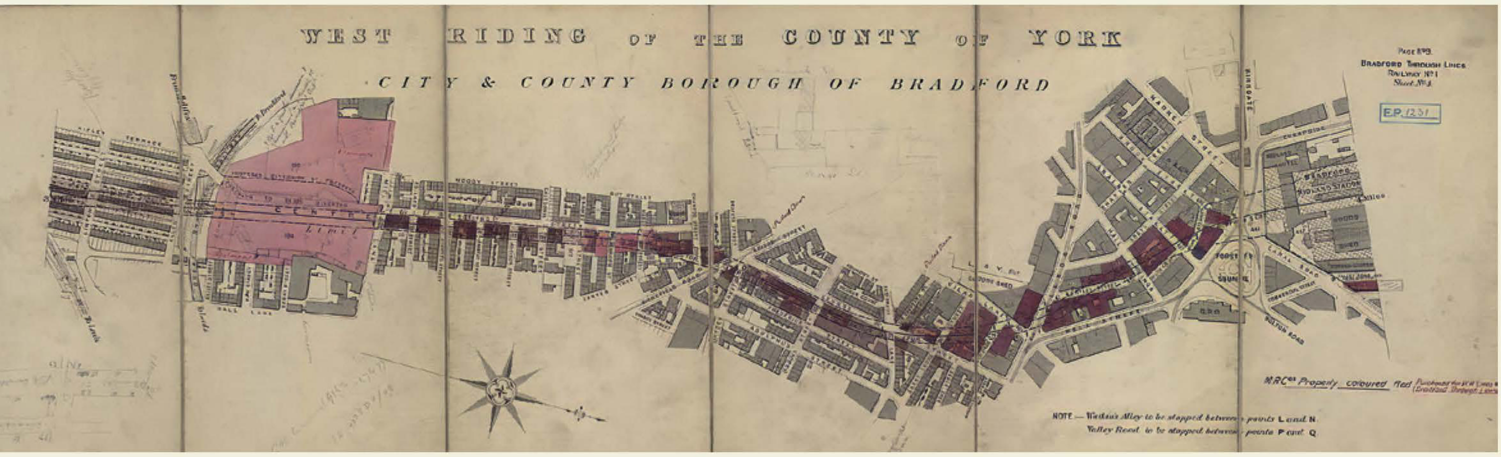
Town Hall, Bradford, Nov. 20th 1906.

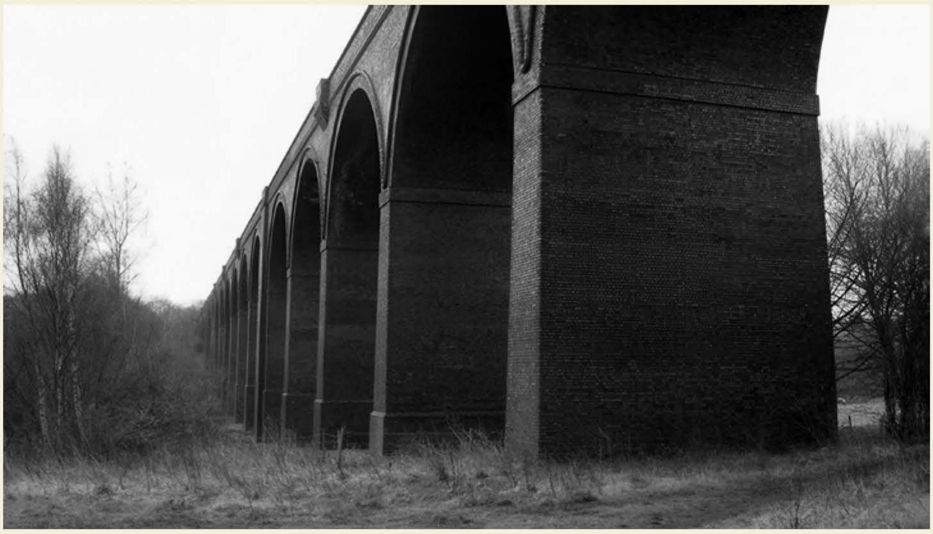
"Bradford Through Line.

Dear Sir,

I am obliged for your letter of the 19th inst., with further reference to this matter. It is very much regretted here that your company should have thought fit to take the course they have done with regard to notices for Parliamentary bills, as after all that has transpired during the last few years, and having regard to the uncompleted negotiations existing between us (only delayed by reason of the company declining to express their definite intention to

Deposited plan – Bradford Through Lines scheme. The 1911 Through Lines scheme largely followed the earlier scheme to tunnel under Bradford City centre. The scale of the impact on the city centre can be seen here, with the then model estate of Ripleyville to the left of the map. The line ran northwards, crossing the centre on a viaduct to cross over Forster Square and Market Place station at Platforms 5 and 6. (Midland Railway Study Centre)


WEST RIDING OF THE COUNTY OF YORK
CITY & COUNTY BOROUGH OF BRADFORD
Page No. 3
Bradford Through Lines
Railway No. 1
Sheet No. 1
E.P. 1231
Forster Square
Canal Road
Valley Road
Market Street
Bolton Road
Bradford Midland Station
M.R. Co's Property coloured Red
NOTE — Watson's Alley to be stopped between points L and N.
Valley Road to be stopped between points P and Q.

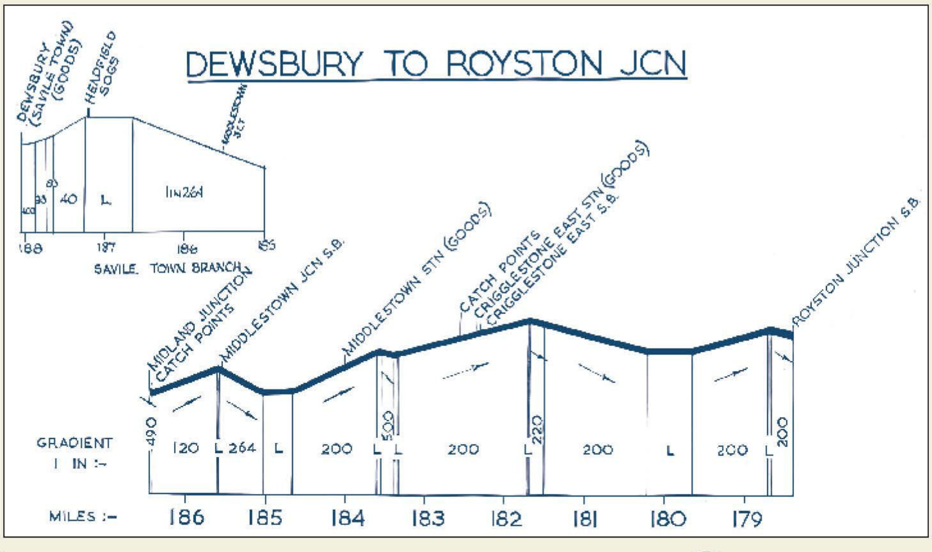


Despite closure over 50 years ago, much of the line remains visible today, especially near the Calder and Hebble Canal, and around Thornhill. The 21-arch, 25m high Crigglestone Viaduct (pictured) crosses the Wakefield–Denby Dale road at British Oak, the Horbury South curve and the storage sidings for Caphouse Colliery (now the National Coal Mining Museum). Smaller (at seventeen arches and 15m high) but equally impressive is the viaduct at Horbury Bridge, crossing the Wakefield–Huddersfield road. Both are of a similar style, using blue brick and were designed by J. A. McDonald. (Author's Collection)

proceed with the works by some fixed date if we were able to relieve them of responsibilities which they feared to carry), and especially to the assistance which has been freely given and offered on our side, feeling runs very high in the city, and makes amicable arrangement such as we have been all along endeavouring, and are still anxious to secure, the more difficult. It is not only the City, but the whole surrounding district too which is moving in the matter, and it is highly desirable now, even from the company's point of view, apart from our side of the question, that something definite should be done with a view to the early withdrawal of the idea of an abandonment bill."

The Leeds Mercury summarised the difficulty with regard to Ripley's water rights, noted previously. "The Corporation has previously submitted that if the company would fix a time for the commencement of the line, they would be prepared to give an undertaking in reference to the water clauses. On the other hand, the company has stipulated the Corporation should first give the undertaking, and that then the company would be prepared to consider the question of going on with their scheme. Hence the impasse."[14] The situation was only partially resolved by the withdrawal of the Abandonment Bill, with the Omnibus Bill then proceeding. This was was set out as "To extend the time limited by the Midland Railway (West Riding Lines) Act, 1898, extended by the Midland Railway Acts, 1901 and 1904, for the compulsory purchase of lands for and for the completion of the railways authorised by the said first mentioned Act, and repeal, alter, or amend all or some of the provisions of Section 23 of the said Act of 1898." It included a line designed to bypass the LYR line between Thornhill and Mirfield and was to run from a junction with the new line at Thornhill, through Thornhill Lees and across Inghams Colliery, before following the valley on the south side of the existing LYR lines to join the MR Huddersfield branch west of Mirfield station. Apparently this was seen as necessary due to protracted negotiations with the LYR over running powers at Mirfield.

The gradient profile of the Dewsbury branch illustrates the general steady gradients and the distance from St. Pancras station under the Midland's measuring scheme. (Author's Collection)



The Bill passed through Parliament in the 1907 session, but as the MR chairman reported to the half-yearly shareholder meeting held on 16th August 1907: "We have told the Bradford people, through their Mayor and other members of the Corporation, that it is our intention to proceed with the construction of this line as soon as time and circumstances are favourable. We regret that any disappointment should be caused to them, especially to the Mayor, who has given great assistance in arriving at the agreement which has been scheduled to the bill. With the increased cost of capital and materials, and with possible labour troubles in front of us, can the people of Bradford, or anyone else who is reasonable, expect that we shall proceed at present with the construction of the line?"[15]

The new line lapsed, as did any time extensions, in 1910. Therefore Huddersfield notionally became the only beneficiary to the abandonment of the main line, as the proposed Omnibus Bill contained a provision for the Mirfield avoidance line, although the need to bring down capital expenditure resulted in the loss of passenger and hotel facilities, formally announced in 1909. A time extension and change of alignment at Newtown to improve the track layout was authorised in July 1906 and in May 1908 (some nine years after authorisation and 40 after the site being purchased when the then Mayor Mr. C. H. Jones was a Midland director[16]) the company accepted the tender of Messrs. Hutchinson and Co., of Leeds and Westminster, for the construction of the Mirfield to Huddersfield branch, the contractors employing over 500 workers. Limited goods facilities opened on 1st November 1910 and catered primarily for merchandise traffic, coal, coke and lime. The completed depot had a 10-ton overhead crane, with accommodation for stone, timber, iron and other general traffic.

Bradford Through Lines – the scheme revived

That the Huddersfield branch opening received little or no attention was hardly surprising, given the announcement by Bradford Council on 25th October 1910 of a revised Midland scheme, ending the previous impasse. The Through Lines Bill entailed a reworked engineering scheme in the city centre, an agreement on water rights and running powers over the LYR lines up the crowded Spen Valley from Thornhill to Oakenshaw. The underground works of the 1898 scheme were replaced with a viaduct across the city centre and high-level platforms 25 feet or so above the Midland station, thus significantly reducing engineering costs and settling the question of water rights which had dogged the West Riding scheme. The Council offered a guarantee to make good Ripley's water supply from the Corporation reservoirs if the Dyeworks' own supply happened to be intercepted by the tunnel – at an estimated cost of £5,000 a year if the guarantee had to be implemented. The Council also offered a rates rebate of £8,000 for twenty years (estimated as the equivalent of a 1½d rate) to the Midland as an inducement to proceed with construction.

The new line was considerably shorter at

5 miles 18 chains in length, commencing at Oakenshaw with a dead-straight tunnel 3,600 yards long, under Bierley Top and Bowling Park, terminating in Ripleyville. After a second short tunnel under Wakefield Road this was to lead into a short cutting from which the city centre viaduct was to start, the lines curving round to avoid the Exchange station and over Leeds Road to the forecourt of the Midland station and then above Platforms 5 and 6 in the station below and on to a junction near Queen's Road Bridge. The route had a headroom of between 15 to 25 feet, enough to accommodate a double-decker tramcar.

Dewsbury Corporation and the Spen Valley towns expressed their annoyance at the loss of the main line by opposing the Bill, on the legitimate grounds that the LYR would find it difficult if not impossible to absorb Midland trains punctually over such a crowded line. The opposition was of no avail and on 19th November 1910 (after only 25 days of public 'consultation') a Bill entitled 'Midland Railway (Bradford Through Lines)' was deposited and on 25th July 1911 the Bradford Through Lines Act received the Royal Assent. Progress in necessary land purchase was slow, the Midland finally buying Waller's Brewery lying in the path between the proposed passenger and goods lines in Bradford city centre in 1914. By then the start of the Great War essentially finished all hopes of a cross-Bradford line, despite a time extension in 1916. In 1918 the Midland Board gave Bradford Corporation a categorical assurance of its intention to complete the Through Lines, but the post-war situation saw this assurance reversed and on 18th November 1919 the Midland formally abandoned the Bradford Through Lines plan.

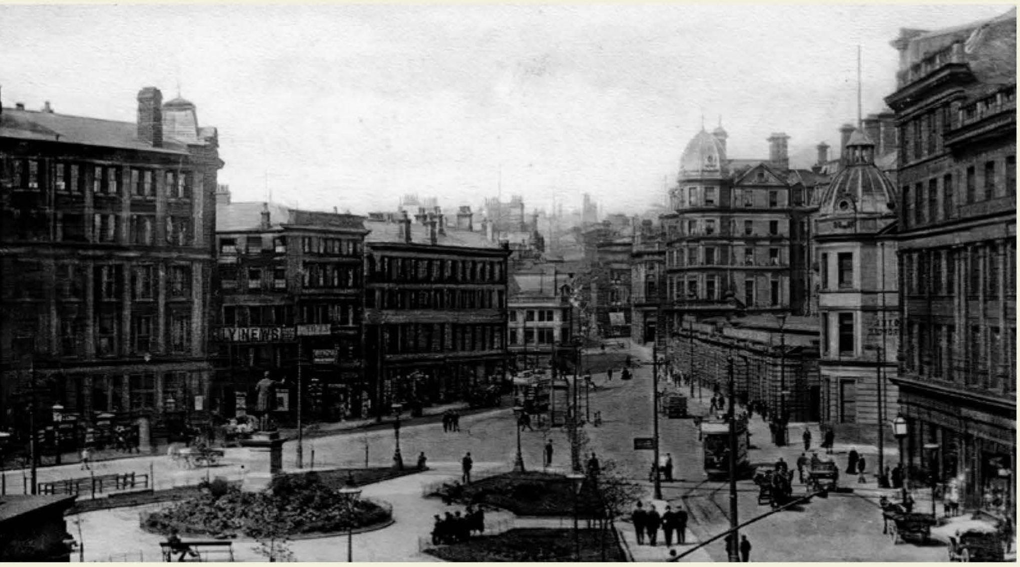
Goods and passenger traffic disappointment

Unsurprisingly, with only two goods lines completed, and a single stretch of what could be called 'main line' for passenger services, actual train services were sparse with only four goods stations, Crigglestone, Middlestown, Dewsbury and Huddersfield (Newtown). Huddersfield saw only one or two goods trains a day and was chastised by the Mayor only four years after opening saying "we got the railway, but it is of little or no service." This, in part, was reflected in a 1915 agreement with the LYR and LNWR which gave the companies access to Newtown, but it is not known if this was ever used. In 1923 the LMS opened a short link line at Red Doles Junction which joined the MR goods depot to the LNWR line just east of Huddersfield and made the rest of the ex-MR line to Mirfield superfluous. The line closed on 5th August 1968, surviving primarily as a coal yard for the nearby Corporation gas works. Dewsbury opened with a service of four goods trains per day and was soon seen as a success by both businesses and the company. After World War II this had dwindled to a single daily pick-up goods train each day, until closure on 18th December 1950, Middlestown having closed in March 1937 and Crigglestone, largely due to the colliery, closed on 10th February 1964.

Demands for local passenger services came to nothing, perhaps understandable given the prime intention being to run main line expresses. Commenting on the opening of the Dewsbury goods station, the Batley News stated "The Company has not yet fully made up their minds as to their intentions in the matter of passenger traffic and it is yet uncertain whether they will embark upon this until the Dewsbury–Bradford section is completed."[17] In September 1907 the Dewsbury Chamber of Commerce and Crigglestone Colliery jointly approached the Midland to open the Dewsbury to Royston branch line for passenger traffic using a motor train similar to that being introduced on the new Wakefield, Sandal, Walton and Cudworth passenger service, with a journey time of twenty minutes between Crigglestone and Dewsbury. The company replied that the cost of porters and a station master was seen as prohibitive.

Both the Midland and the LYR made limited use of the Royston–Dewsbury section as a more direct route south, avoiding the trouble of going via Leeds. The new Midland timetable for July 1909 contained the announcement of a new service using the line from Halifax and Bradford providing a new direct route to London and the South and West of England inaugurated by both the Midland and the LYR. The new route enabled the Midland to compete with the GN with the quickest train from Bradford Exchange to St. Pancras at four hours and twenty-eight minutes. This service foreshadowed the running of 'The Yorkshireman' over the same route by the LMS from March 1925 to late in 1939. This express service had departures from Bradford at 9.10am with the return from St. Pancras at 4.55pm with a journey time of 4¼ hours.[18] The line from Royston to Thornhill was used sporadically up to closure on 13th June 1960 for passenger services, closing to goods traffic on 4th May 1968 (although the section to Crigglestone was kept open until August pending the closure of the nearby colliery).

The centre of Bradford would have been blighted by the building of the viaduct coming across Forster Square on an approximate north-south axis as shown in this photograph, from Swaine Street and Well Street to the left, across the Square and over the Market Place station passenger buildings to the right. (Author's Collection)



Reflection

Both the Midland and Bradford both had much to gain from the scheme. The company would get a new, direct route to the Settle–Carlisle line and Scotland, reduce congestion and avoid reversing at Leeds, as well as opening up new markets to welcoming towns across West Yorkshire. The cost of the 1898 scheme was estimated at over £2.6 million and the negotiations preceding the deal suggested municipal sympathy to the Midland's timely appeal of the rating valuations of all their premises within Bradford in early October. The initial scrapping of the Halifax and Huddersfield branch in 1898 (lines 2,3 and 5) realised an estimated saving of £1,098,87, with the cost of the Mirfield–Huddersfield and Dewsbury goods branch to be added back in still left a cost of around £1.2 million.

Bradford saw the new scheme as a development boost at a time of reduced trade in its main woollen market and the wider area would have benefited from a reduction in the price of coal, with one contemporary estimate suggesting a fall in the price of coal by one shilling per ton if the scheme had gone ahead. From both a commercial and transport perspective, a through scheme would end its branch line status and significantly improve its commercial and industrial position vis-a-vis Leeds, its traditional city rival. As the Leeds Mercury stated: "No main line of any company except the Midland runs through Leeds, and no main line at all runs through Bradford. The Midland alone makes one or the other the main line station, and if the prestige is transferred to Bradford, there goes with it much that at present makes Leeds the commercial capital of the North of England."[19]

By 1906 abandonment made economic sense to the Midland. As the shareholders were told at the 1907 meeting, costs of about £1½million had been hit by falls in the price of stocks and shares, affecting the raising of capital, as well as the increasing cost of materials, and possible labour troubles. Unmentioned at the meeting, but a major financial concern was a huge deficit in pension funds of over £843,000 (£85 million today) uncovered by an actuarial review in November 1906. The open-ended potential obligations regarding water rights were an additional significant risk liability. Local economic circumstances had also changed substantially, with the scarcity in wool hampering Bradford's recovery from the slump of the 1890s, as was derelict property and a lack of building development. With the Corporation tramway network taking business off the railways, and the agreement with the LYR in 1909 to run passenger trains to London and the south on its behalf, the case for huge infrastructure investment became even more questionable. The Leeds Mercury concluded "This development, indeed, is but symptomatic, alike of railway timidity in general and of the present depreciation of Bradford in particular, as the best-informed outsider could not have formed a favourable opinion of Bradford's future any time in the last few years, as it is still practically depending upon one industry."[20]

The cost of the Through Lines scheme of 1911 was initially quoted as £815,667 (£80,711,921 today). For the year 1913, the Midland accounts showed that £72,989 had been spent, of which £62,412 was for land and compensation, with £310,121 being expended so far in total for the period 1911-13.[21] To assist the Midland, the Council quietly struck a deal to relieve it of its statutory responsibilities to rehouse workers displaced by the line. Actual financial inducements from the Council of £8,000 per annum (£791,000 today) for twenty years towards rate reductions, and indemnifying against water rights claims, whilst substantial from a ratepayer's perspective, were not enough of an incentive to the Midland, and the Council was suffering losses in both rateable values and income from rates. As an illustration, Huddersfield lost over £500 per annum (£50,000 today) on the Newtown site alone.

Formal abandonment after the Great War made financial sense to the company and the completed lines never remunerated the company for the great outlay incurred. Bradford suffered not just a loss of prestige and actual railway connections, but also the equivalent of 'planning blight' as a large belt of property had been acquired in the heart of the city, and a comprehensive scheme for development in the central area had been held up for years. On 30th September 1920 all the property in the central area which had been acquired for demolition was sold to Bradford Corporation for £295,000 (£11 million), the money being paid in instalments.

The only place to significantly benefit from the Midland's involvement was Dewsbury where the building of a new road bridge across the Calder opened up access to the west and south of the town centre and reduced the pressure on the main road out of the town towards Thornhill. The Midland also experimented here with motor wagons which coped more easily than horses with the surrounding steep hills.

The end of the scheme represented "a reminder of the frailty of human promises and particularly, in this case, of promises made on behalf of railway companies. It effectively cancelled all the pious aspirations expressed in this connection by the old Midland Railway Company".[22]

Postscript

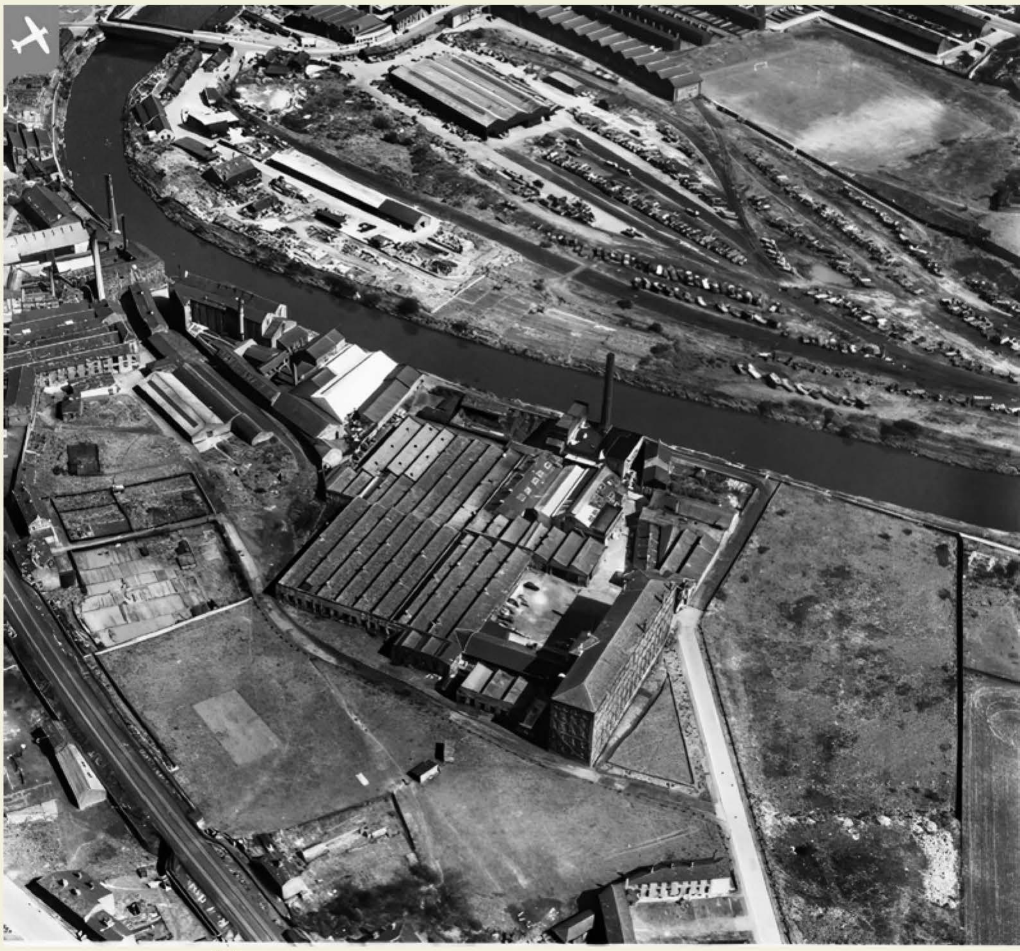
Local government reorganisation in 1974 saw the creation of the West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive, with the aim of providing improved integrated public transport across the newly created metropolitan county. Although dominated by the bus services of the constituent local Councils, it contained a small but influential rail group, which aimed to improve rail services across the new County. One review examined cross-Bradford rail services, in conjunction with a reduction in the number of lines between Leeds and Bradford, and services south of Bradford down the Spen Valley to Dewsbury. Two routes crossing Bradford on a viaduct near Petergate were briefly considered in discussions with British Rail, the new West Yorkshire County Council and Bradford Council (all from a planning perspective). Yet again, nothing came of the scheme and Bradford is now assessed as the worst-connected major city for rail transport (out of twenty UK locations) despite being Britain's seventh largest city.[23] It is hoped that the PTE's successor, the West Yorkshire Combined Authority, sees its plans for a new through Bradford station contained in its 2024 Rail Strategy come to fruition, but if past plans are anything to go by, then this too will remain an aspiration. As the *Yorkshire Observer* on 19th November 1906 prophetically noted: "Bradford is today on a siding and if this scheme is allowed to lapse, there it may remain till the crack of doom."

Sources and references

This article has largely been prepared from local newspaper sources held in the British Newspaper Archive website and resources in the excellent Huddersfield Exposed website. A comprehensive Bradford perspective is 'All change – Bradford's through railway schemes' by John Thornhill available on the Bradford Historical and Antiquarian website, whilst *The Regional History of the Railways of Great Britain – South and West Yorkshire* by David Joy (David and Charles) has proved invaluable as the standard reference book. The Bank of England inflation calculator has been used to obtain 2024 comparative prices. Thanks go to Laura Smith, and also Dave Harris at the excellent Midland Railway Study Centre and its invaluable archive material.

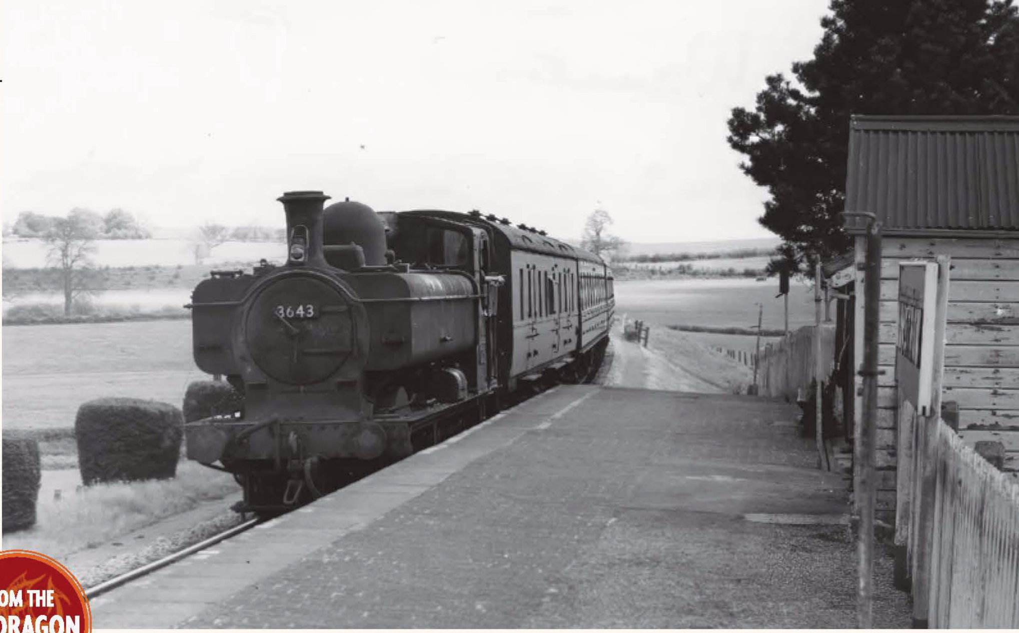
1. *Batley Reporter* 23 November 1906
2. *Bradford Daily Telegraph* 6 October 1897.
3. *Bradford Daily Telegraph* 6 October 1897
4. *Yorkshire Post* letter 9 October 1897.
5. *Yorkshire Post* 8 October 1897
6. *The Huddersfield Daily Examiner* 2 October 1897
7. *Yorkshire Post* 21 October 1897
8. *Batley Reporter* 22 October 1897
9. *Batley Reporter* 12 November 1897
10. *Halifax Evening Courier* 14 April 1898
11 *Yorkshire Observer*
12. *Huddersfield Daily Chronicle* 10 November 1898
13. *Bradford Daily Telegraph* 20 November 1906
14. *Leeds Mercury* 22 November 1906
15. *Railway News* 24 August 1907
16 Charles Henry Jones, (1800-1884), the first Mayor of Huddersfield, and a Director of the LYR before joining the Midland Board. *Huddersfield Daily Examiner* 19 May 1908 and Huddersfield Exposed website
17. *Batley News* 3 March 1906
18. C. J. Allen, *Titled Trains of Great Britain* 1947
19. *Leeds Mercury* 29 October 1910
20. *Leeds Mercury* 20 November 1906
21. *Bradford Weekly Telegraph* 25 February 1914.
22. *Yorkshire Post* 20 March 1925
23. Be the Best Communications, People, Places Policy and Data Unit, quoted in *New Civil Engineer* 11 November 2021

Photographs of Dewsbury Goods station are very rare and this aerial view was taken looking east in 1952, shortly after closure. The warehouses and track layout can still be clearly seen (being used for vehicle storage), as can the bridge over the Calder at the top left of the picture. (Britain from Above)



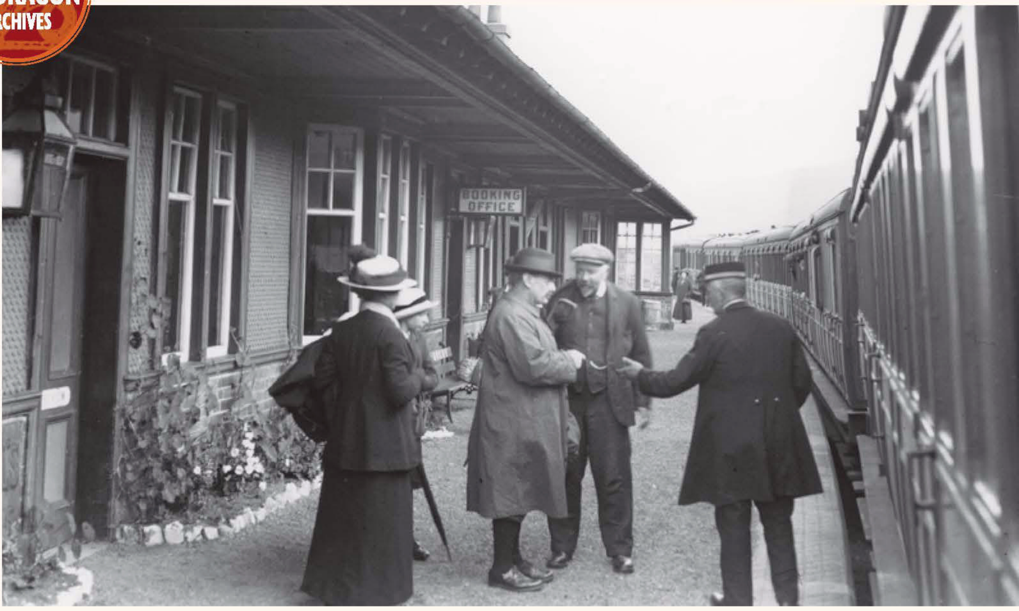
LITTLE THINGS MEAN A LOT

So many large railway stations are noted for their great architecture or roof constructions, yet most of our stations are much smaller and homelier, often not more than lineside halts. Nevertheless, in their day (and sometimes still) they have been important to their users... just not as many of them.



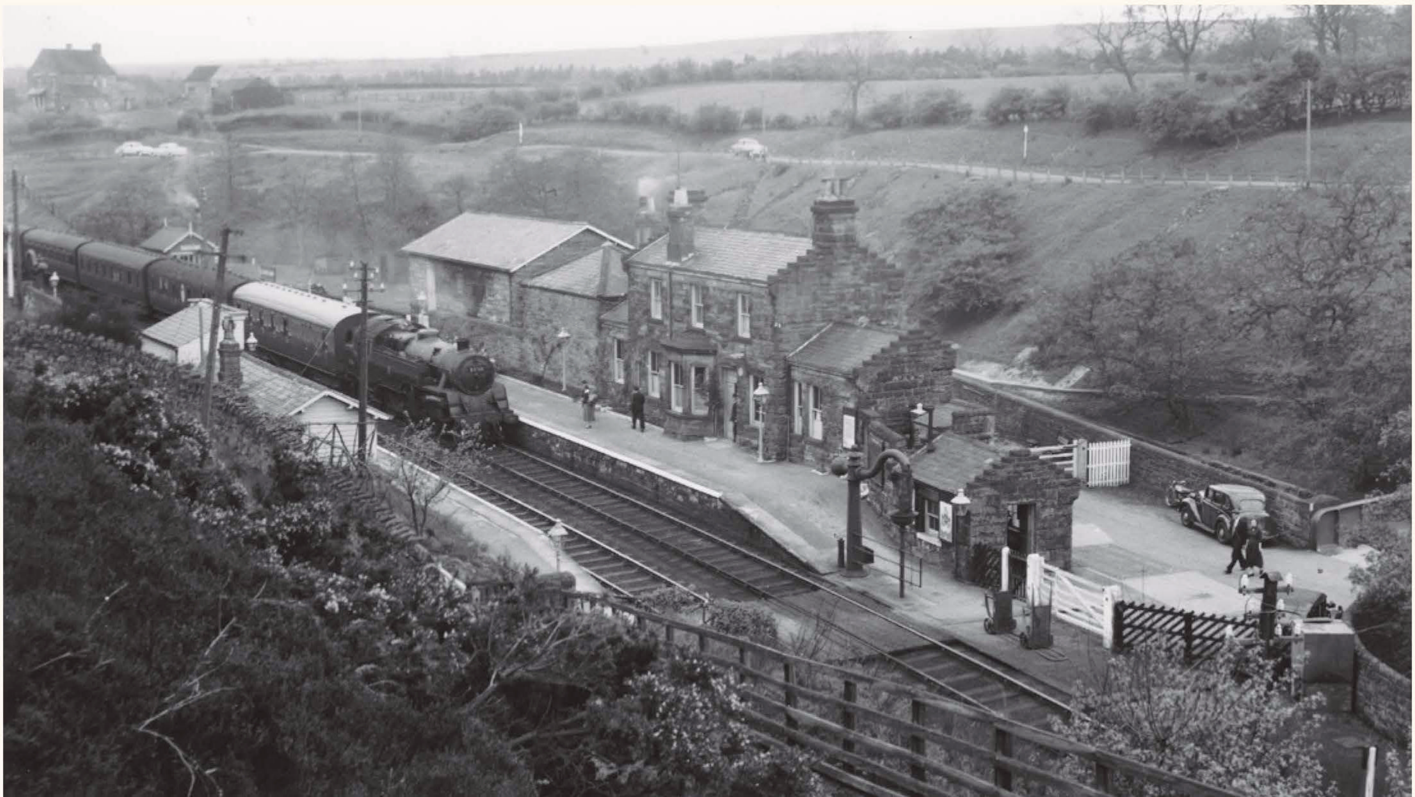
FROM THE PENDRAGON ARCHIVES

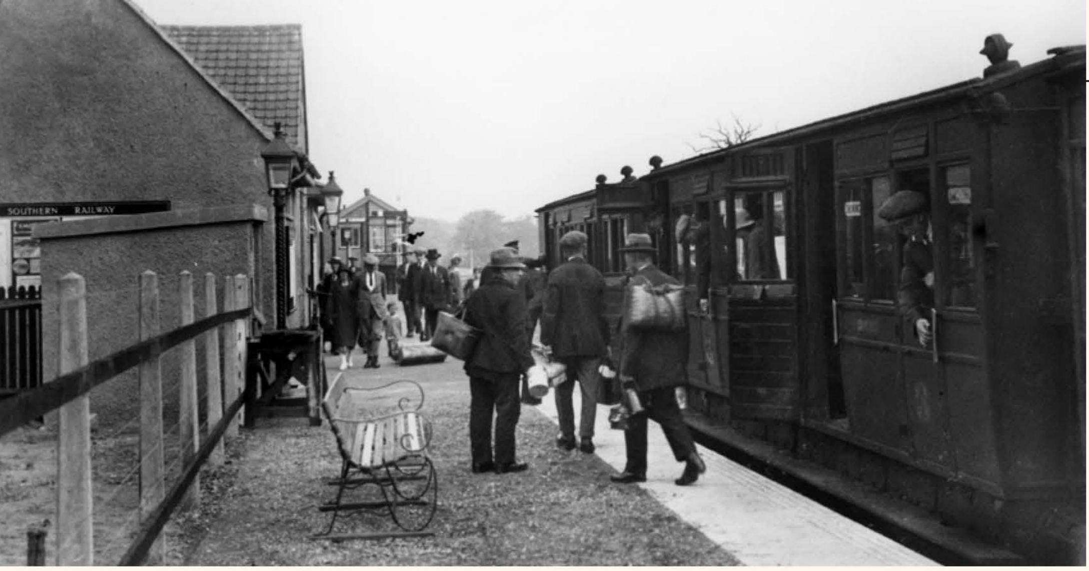
Wanstrow (TOP)
We're in Somerset on the branch which wandered across from Witham, on the GWR West of England route, via Shepton Mallet and Wells to Yatton, on the Bristol & Exeter main line. On 11th May 1963 GWR '57XX' 0-6-0PT No.3643 with the 1.30pm Witham–Yatton is ambling into the little Wanstrow station, remote in an agricultural landscape. The station building looks well weathered, shall we say, but someone has cared enough to sculpt some shrubbery. The East Somerset Railway was originally broad gauge and as it couldn't afford to build a station at Wanstrow the local inhabitants paid for it. The passenger service ended in September 1963.
(J. S. Gilks)



Bridge of Orchy (RIGHT)
On the North British Railway's West Highland line the Bridge of Orchy station master respectfully checks the tickets of some well-heeled passengers. The station is immaculately kept and gardened despite its remote location near the Horse Shoe Curve around the side of Ben Doran and on the verge of Rannoch Moor. The date is 27th July 1914 and this settled order was soon to be shattered.

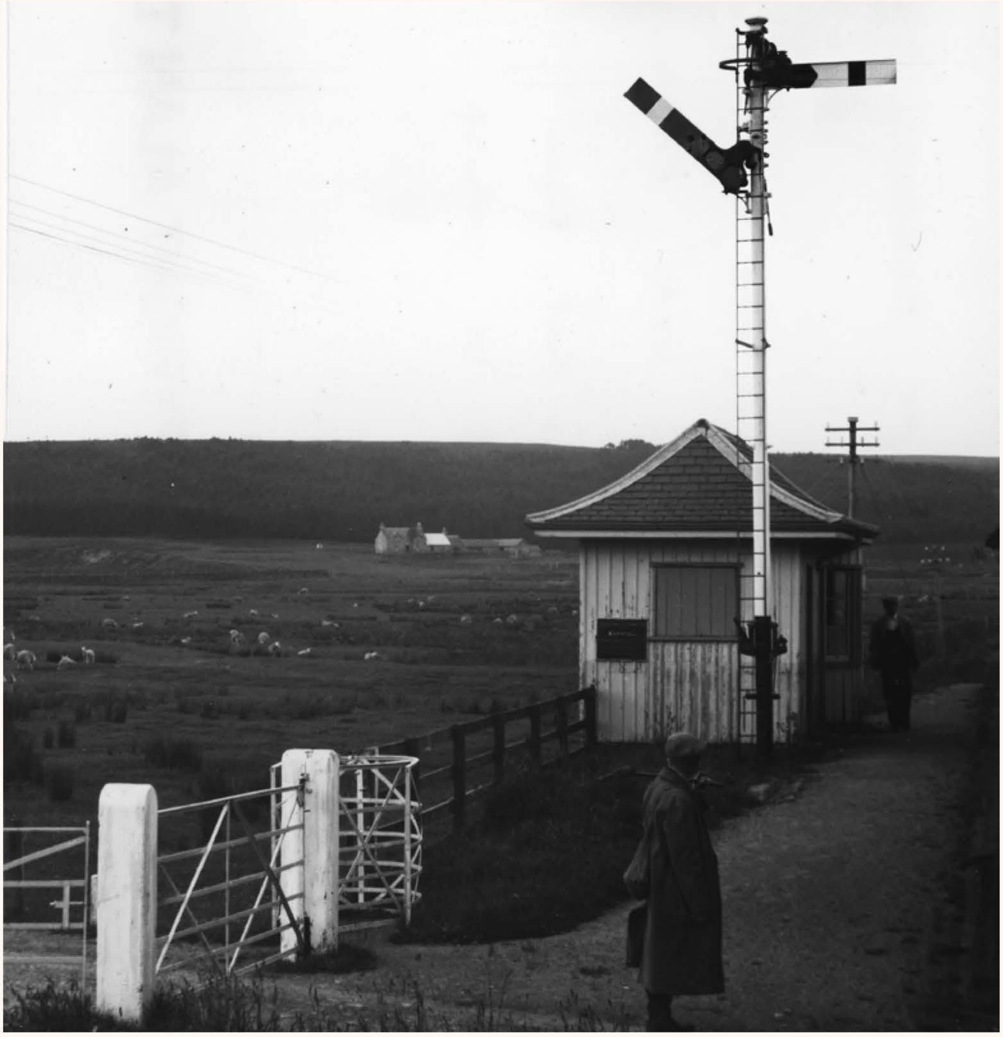
Goathland (BELOW)
Up on the North York Moors the moorland village of Goathland was served by a well-provisioned station on the Malton–Whitby line. In this c1957 view a few passengers are waiting for BR Class 4 2-6-4T No.80118 with its Whitby-bound train. Someone has arrived in a respectable car and a couple strolls up with time to spare. The station, not too greatly changed, remains familiar to passengers on the heritage North Yorkshire Moors Railway.
(David Sutcliffe)





Fawley (TOP)

The Southern Railway opened a branch on the western shore of Southampton Water in 1925 from Totton to Fawley and this is the arrival there of the first train on 20th July. Three fellows just alighted look set for a purposeful day (fishing?). The passenger service was not greatly patronised and ended in 1966 but the oil refinery at Fawley has been, and remains, the branch's *raison d'être*.



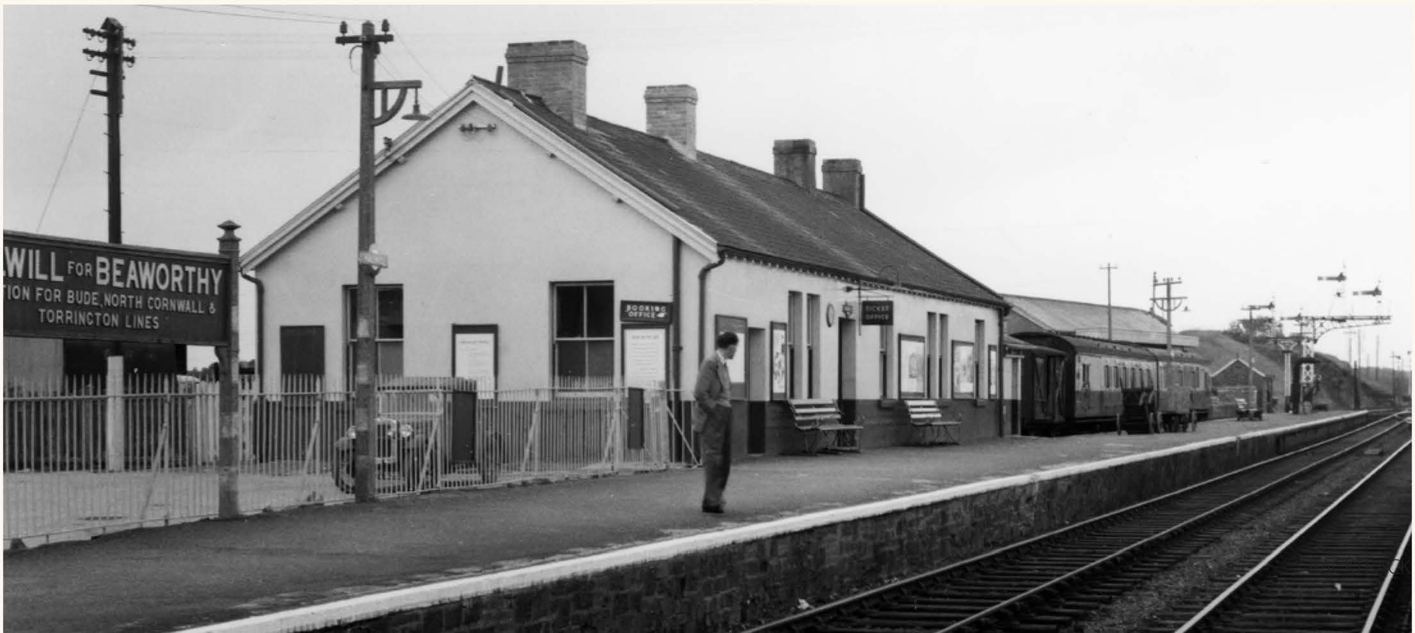
Borrobol Platform (LEFT)

As the Inverness–Wick 'Far North' line made its way through the open landscape of Sutherland, the lonely Borrobol Platform was encountered between Helmsdale and Forsinard. The 1959 timetable notes "Stops to take up when passengers on platform and on notice at previous stopping station to set down." Any intending passenger could lower the arm of the double-sided signal to stop the train and at least there was a meagre shelter to wait in. On 10th June 1960 a southbound train has been requested to stop and there is a passenger! The guard is walking back towards the signal to reset it to the 'off' position.
(Alan Tyson)

Halwill (for Beaworthy)

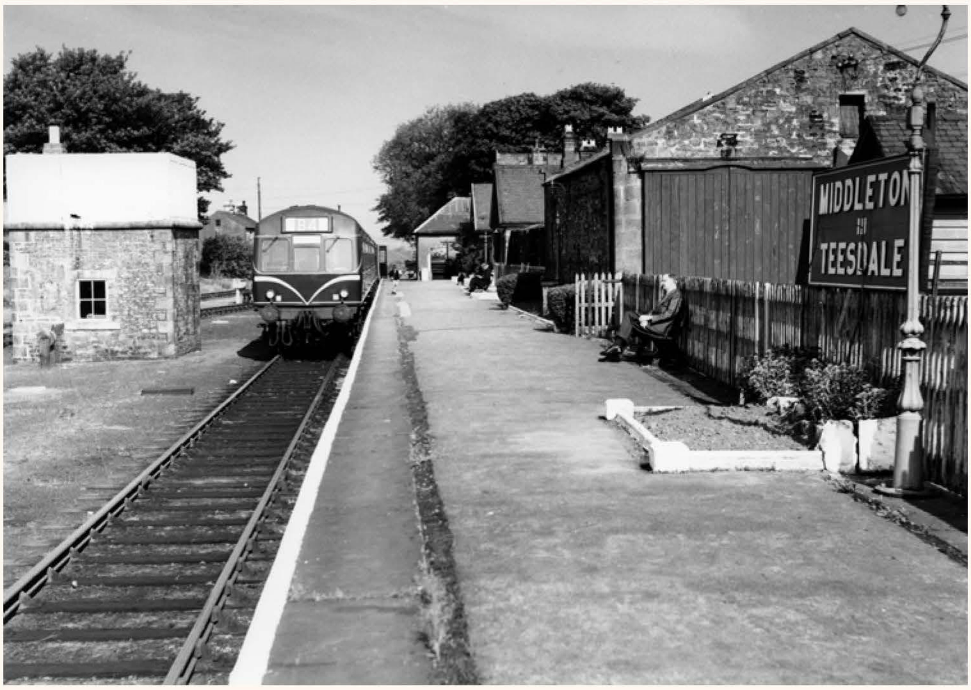
(BELOW)

Looking west on 26th June 1955, the running-in board sums up this modest country station's place in the scheme of things. It was the junction for the London & South Western Railway's line to Bude and the North Cornwall to Padstow, but in 1925 it belatedly gained another junction when the Southern extended its Barnstaple–Torrington branch to join the main line at Halwill. The stock of junction signals is thus explained. For all that, nothing much is happening... The Torrington branch closed in 1965, the Cornwall lines a year later.
(J. S. Gilks)



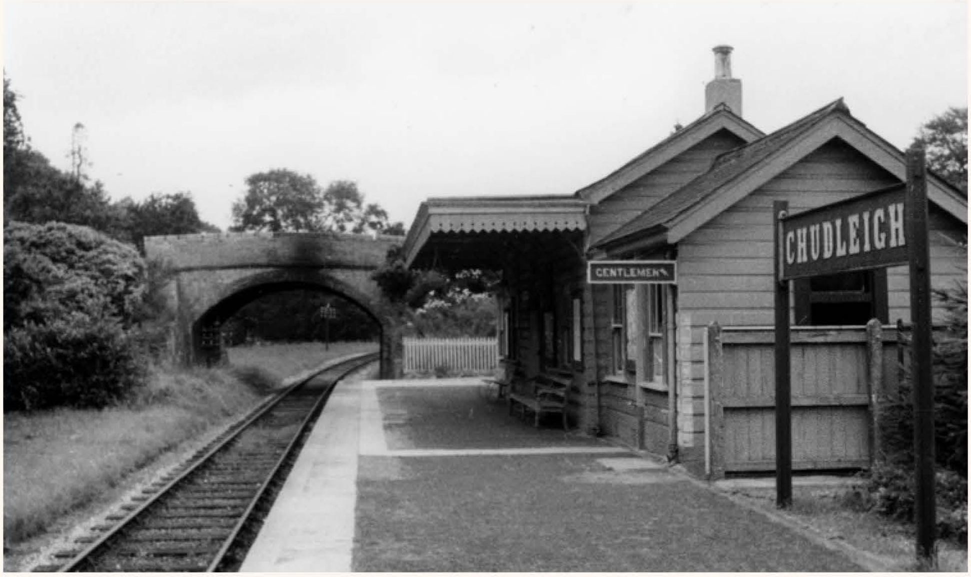
Middleton-in-Teesdale (TOP)

The country branch line terminus. Middleton-in-Teesdale was at the end of a scenic branch from Darlington via Barnard Castle where, until 1962, it had diverged from the famous Stainmore route to Kirkby Stephen and Tebay. On a sunny spring day on 4th June 1960 the 10.00am to Darlington was awaiting its moment. Closure was still four years away. (J. S. Gilks)



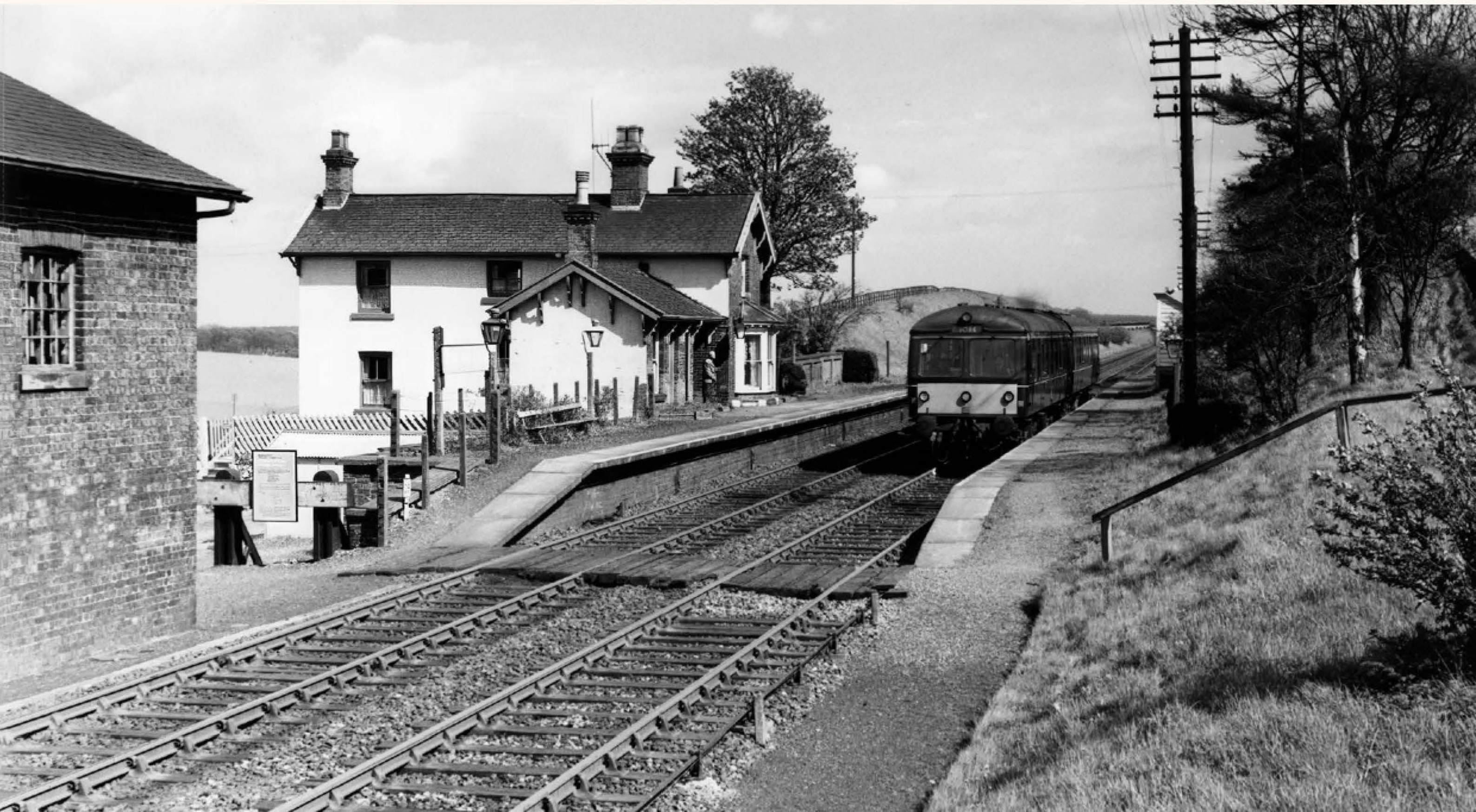
Chudleigh (RIGHT)

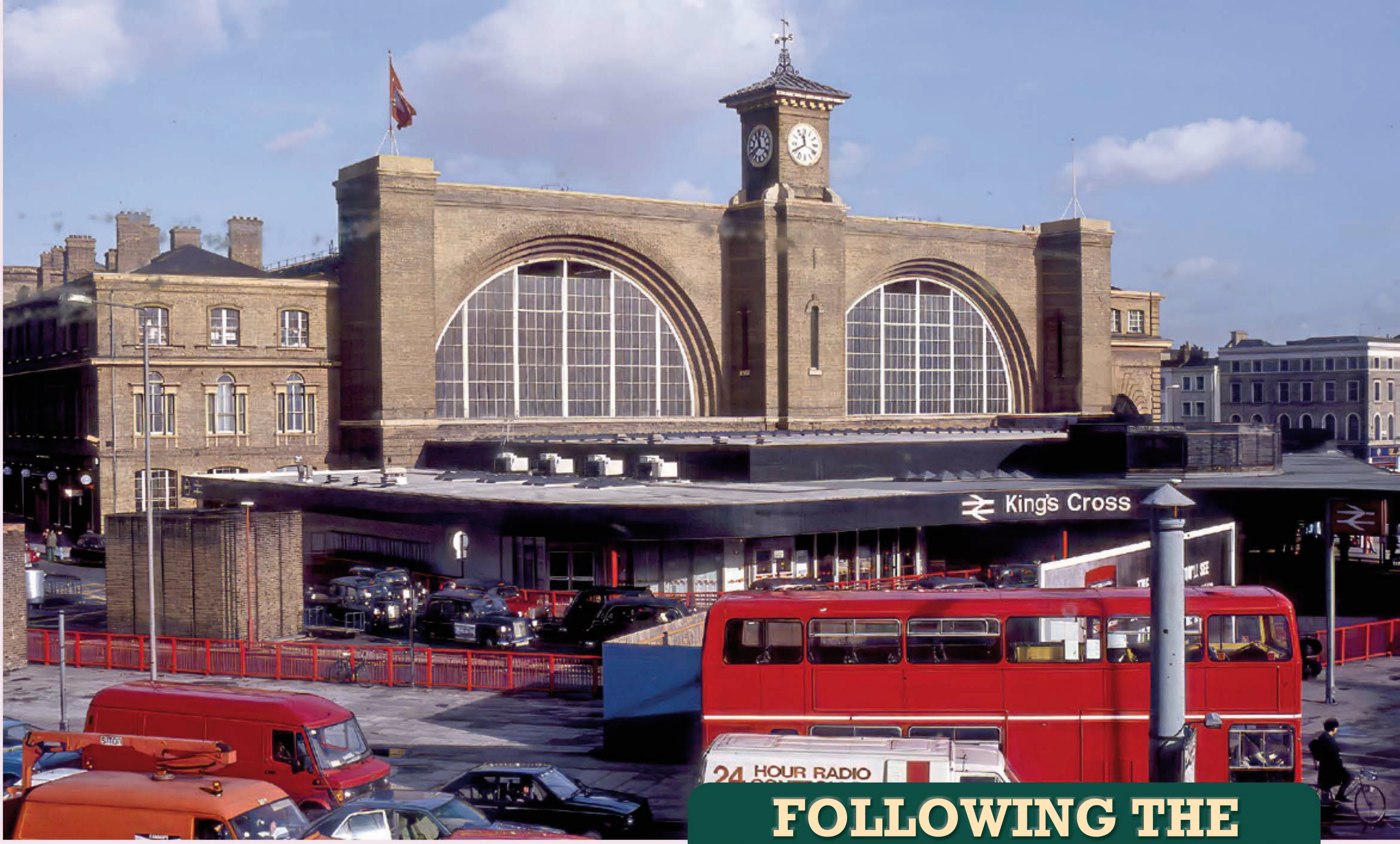
The neat timber-built station at Chudleigh was on the Teign Valley branch from Exeter via Heathfield, where it formed a junction with the branch from Moretonhampstead, to Newton Abbot. It served a delightful but sparsely populated area and was closed as far as Heathfield in 1958, not long before this photograph was taken and well before Dr. Beeching came upon the scene; the Moretonhampstead branch and the rest to Newton Abbot went the following year.



Kipling Cotes (BELOW)

On the principle of "the smaller the hamlet, the grander the station" was Kipling Cotes on the York–Beverley line. In fact, it is hard to find any such place as Kipling Cotes on a map! It is said the station was used by Lord Hotham of nearby Dalton Hall and was perhaps provided as an inducement to allow construction of the railway across his land. It had become an unstaffed halt in 1961 but still appeared in fine order when called at by a Hull–York DMU on 1st May 1964. The closure of the York–Beverley direct route to Hull in 1965 is still argued over – but BR will have figured passenger trains could be sent via Selby and a service thus be maintained. (J. S. Gilks)



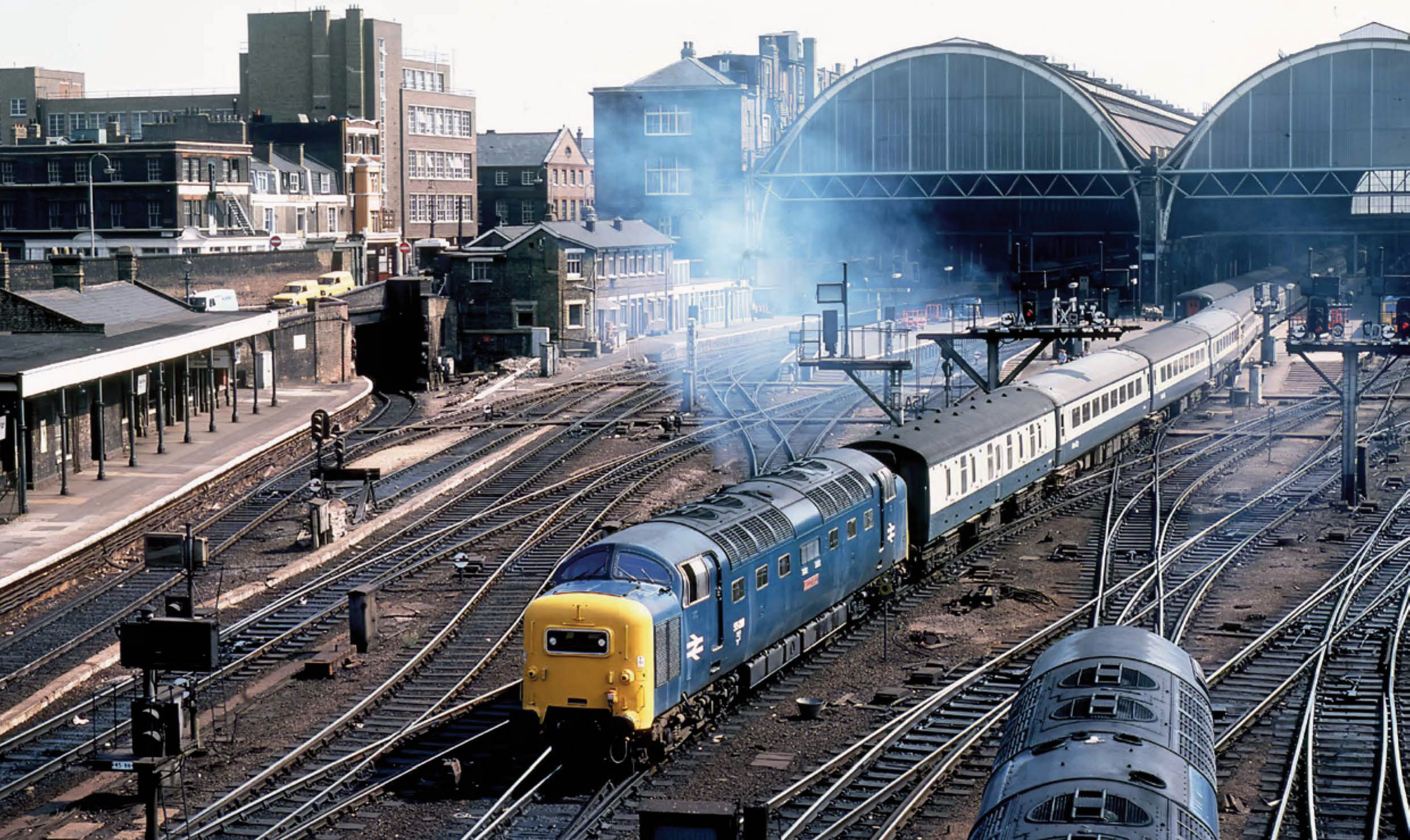


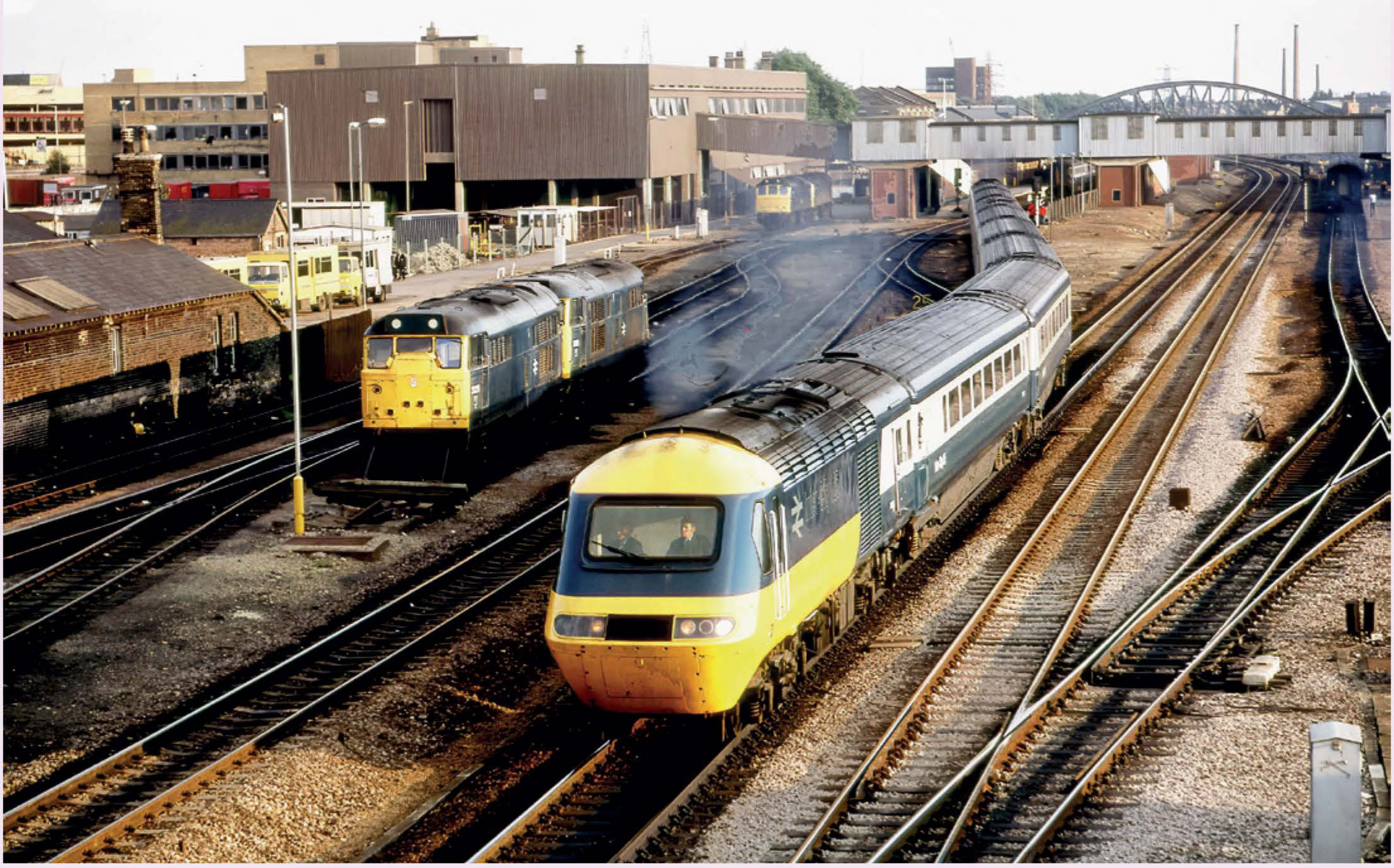
ABOVE: **Where it starts – King's Cross on 30th January 1990 from the corner of Pancras Road. Designed by Lewis Cubitt, the frontage (and the twin-arched roof behind it) were much admired for their architectural simplicity (as compared with the neighbouring St. Pancras). The low-level edifice in front did it no favours, though at least was an improvement on the so-called 'African village' of shops which grew there in the 1930s – but it has been cleared away now.**

BELOW: **The business end at King's Cross. On 10th July 1976 'Deltic' No.55 018 *Ballymoss* departs with the 16.00 to Edinburgh photographed from above the Gasworks Tunnel. On the left is the York Road platform which was served by suburban trains making for Moorgate via the tunnel to the Metropolitan Widened Lines.**

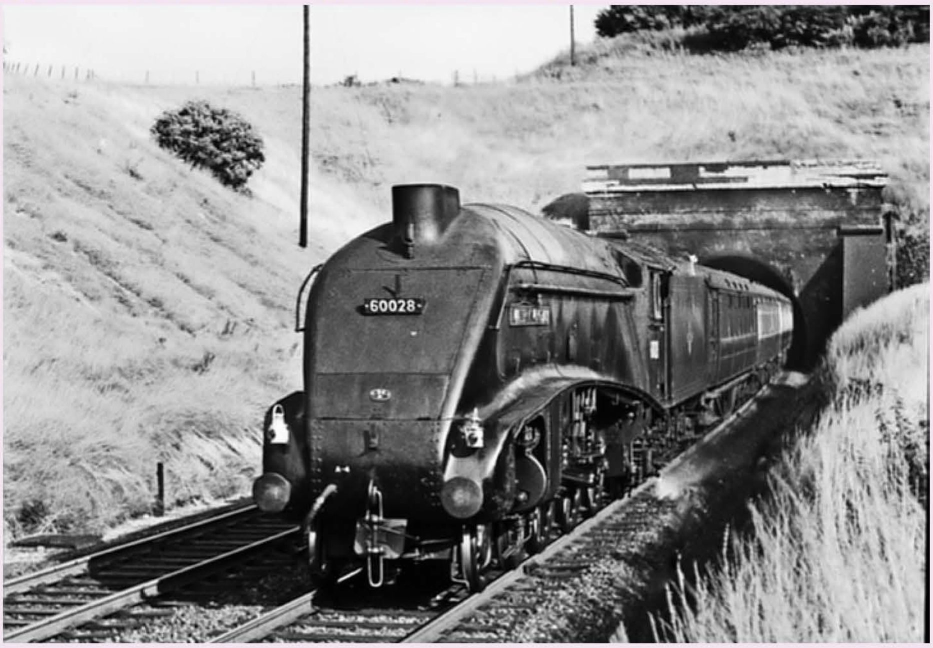
FOLLOWING THE ROUTE OF THE '10.00'

The 'Ten o'clock' from London King's Cross to Edinburgh Waverley and the equivalent southbound service need no introduction as the 'Flying Scotsman' train service. *On the Tracks of the Flying Scotsman* by David Pendleton with photographs by Gavin Morrison is to be published by Great Northern Books this month. **GAVIN MORRISON** has provided these photographs of the East Coast Main Line from London to just short of the halfway point at York; another feature later will take us north to the Scottish capital.



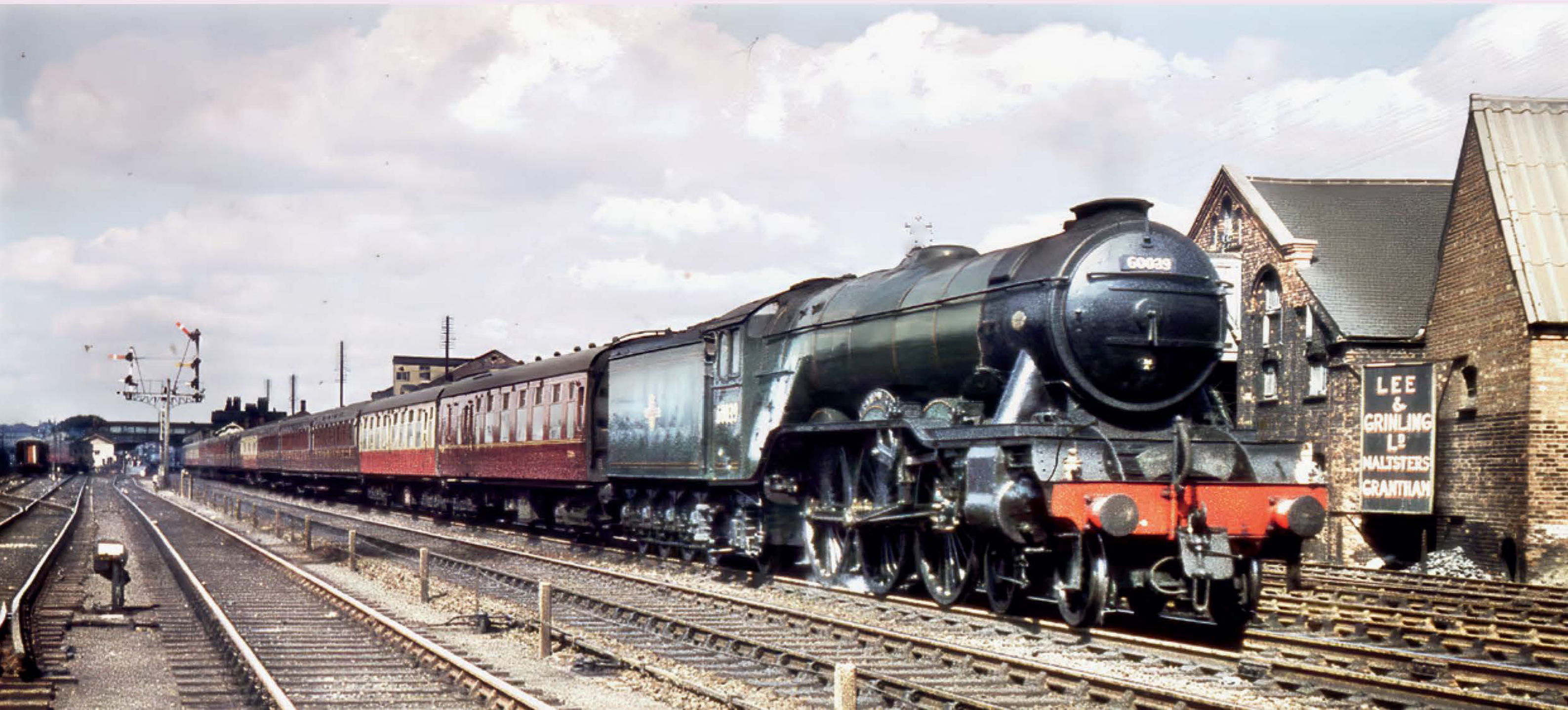


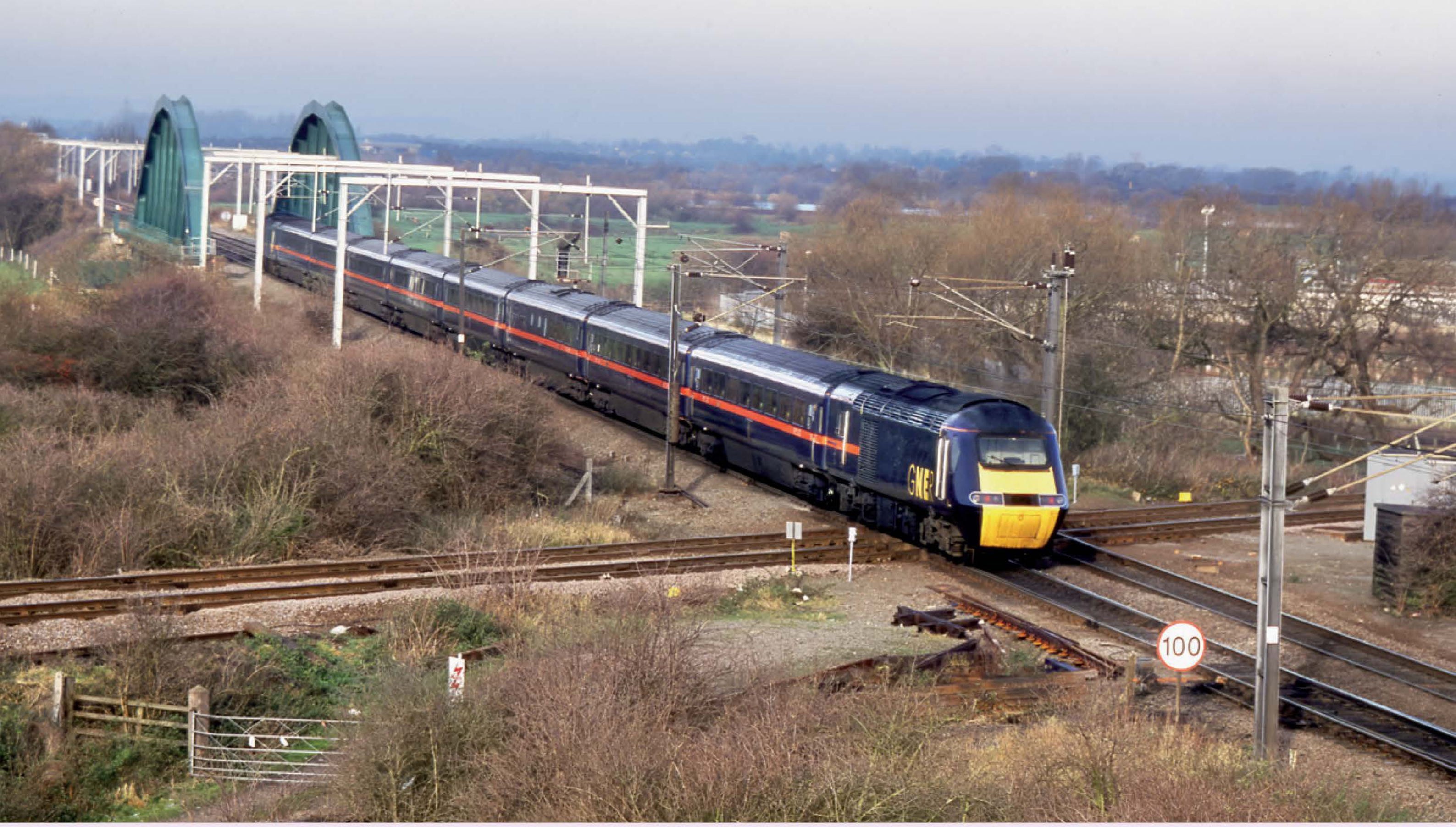
ABOVE: **Peterborough station was extensively rebuilt in the 1970s to produce a long-planned improved reconfiguration of its layout. On 12th September 1981 an 'Inter-City 125' High Speed Train is departing with a down express, with a couple of Class 31s awaiting their next duties.**



RIGHT: **LNER A4 Pacific No.60028 *Walter K. Whigham* emerges from Stoke Tunnel descending from the summit with a down express on 2nd August 1958. This is on the racing stretch over which records were set!**

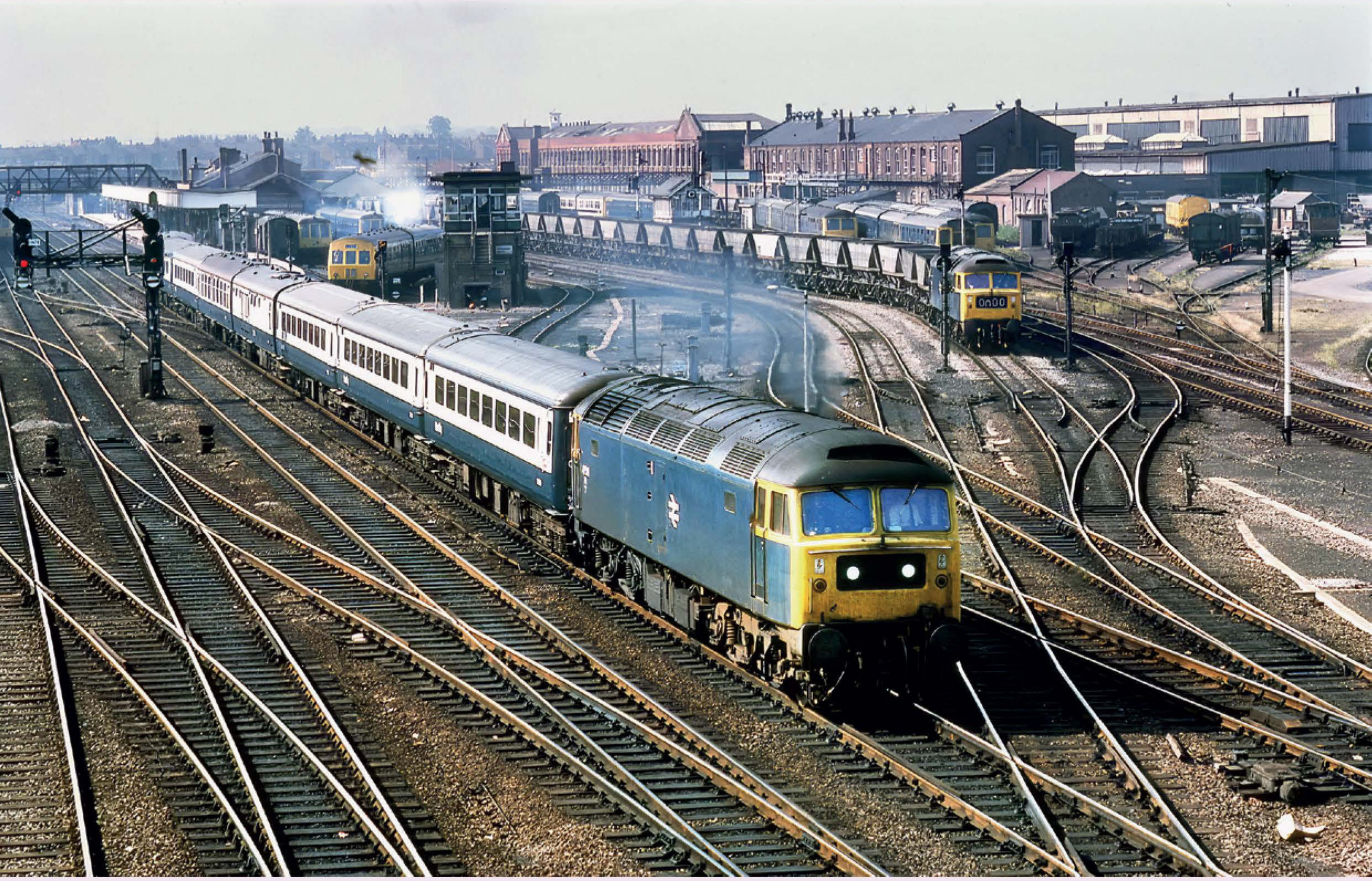
BELOW: **Grantham was an operational centre of note, with a locomotive depot and was often an engine-changing point. Double-chimneyed A3 Pacific No.60039 *Sandwich* leaves Grantham past the premises of Lee & Grinling, Maltsters, with an up express on 5th September 1959.**

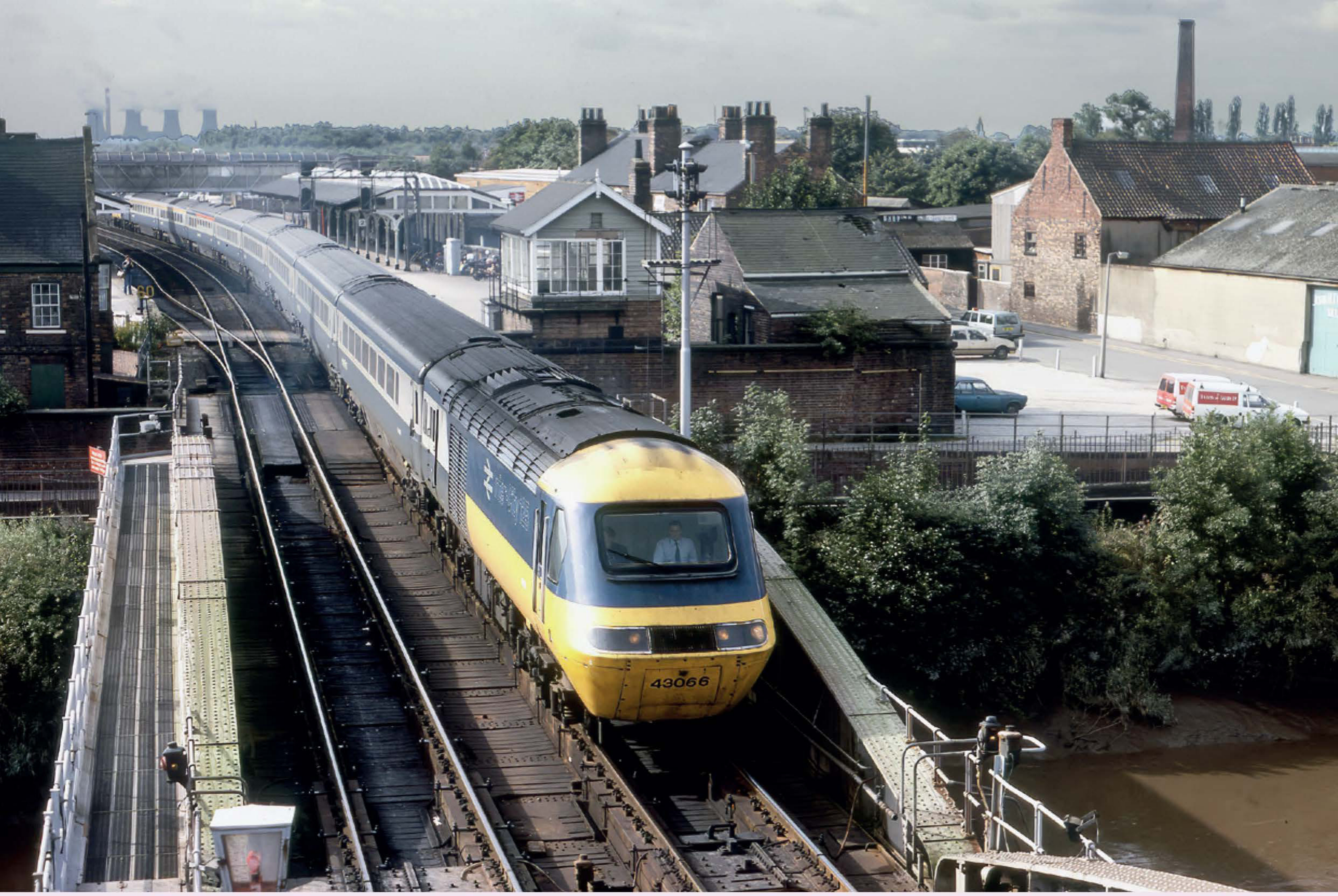




ABOVE: **The dark blue era of GNER at Newark on 8th December 2001 as a High Speed Train goes over the flat crossing of the Nottingham–Lincoln line, approaching the bridge over the River Trent. Another flat crossing over the ECML had existed at Retford but that was eliminated in 1965 by the construction of a 'diveunder'.**

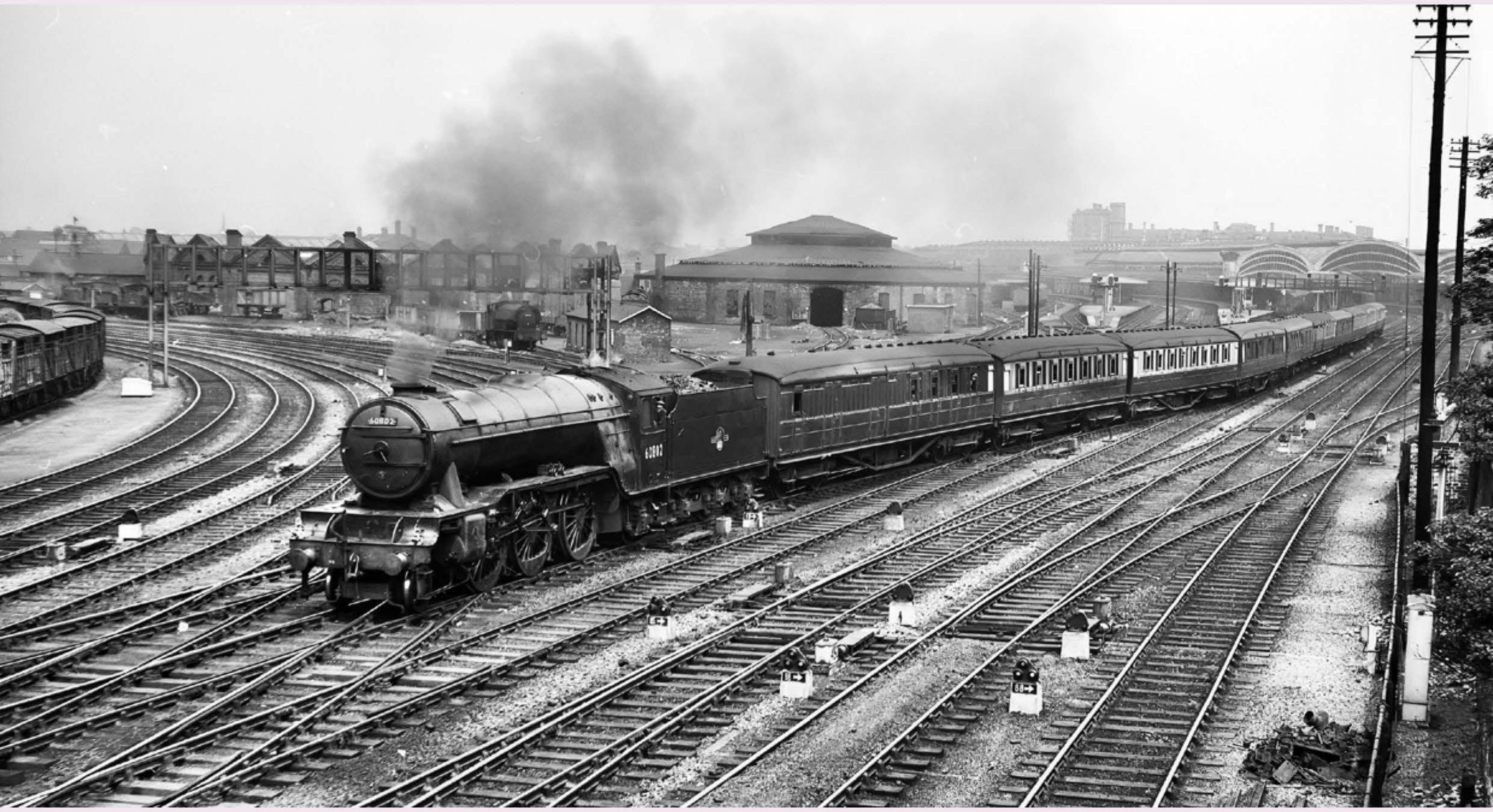
BELOW: **Doncaster – a city now but no longer the centre for the huge railway workshop industry established by the Great Northern Railway in 1853. On 7th July 1977 Class 47 No.47 550 leaves with the 07.55 King's Cross–Leeds. A BR MkI buffet and what looks like a MkI first appear between the MkIII air-conditioned stock. Another Class 47 on a rake of empty coal hoppers reminds us of a once everyday traffic in South Yorkshire. The recent announcement by Wabtec that it is to end activity at Doncaster certainly signifies the end of a great era. The long footbridge from the station into the Works is currently reported as being dismantled.**





ABOVE: **An 'Inter-City 125' HST fronted by power car No.43 066 embarks on the crossing of the Selby swing bridge over the River Ouse as the 09.00 King's Cross–Edinburgh on 20th September 1983. Note the signal lights on the bridge for river traffic. The opening of the Selby diversion the following month ended Selby's position on the ECML, but the swing bridge remains in use carrying trains on the Leeds–Hull route.**

BELOW: **The southern exit from York station as it was on 14th June 1958 when LNER V2 2-6-2 No.60802 was departing with a Newcastle–Leeds service, crossing the junction with the avoiding lines curving round to the left. In the centre background is the old York South locomotive shed roundhouse which closed in 1961 and was demolished two years later. On the left is the cattle dock and in the sidings alongside the avoiding lines can be seen a J72 0-6-0T and a J94 0-6-0ST shunting wagons. Compare the amount of pointwork with the minimal provision today!**



ANDREW FREDERICK ROCK
SUPERINTENDENT AND ELEC

The Staffordshire Knot as displayed on The Knotty's locomotives, rolling stock, staff uniforms and even its stationery. This example adorns the preserved electric battery locomotive designed by Andrew Frederick Rock and built at Stoke Works in 1917.

His career in summary

Following the adoption of the Staffordshire Knot to adorn its locomotives, rolling stock, staff uniforms and even its letter-headings, the North Staffordshire Railway (NSR) has become immortalised as 'The Knotty'. Andrew Frederick Rock joined the 'The Knotty' as a Junior Clerk at Black Bull on the Biddulph Valley line on 15th November 1871. Some 30 years later, on 1st February 1902, he was appointed as the company's Telegraph Superintendent & Electrical Engineer and held that position until 1923 when the NSR became a constituent company of the London Midland & Scottish Railway (LMS). He retired from the LMS on 31st January 1924 and went to live in North Wales. His death on 29th March 1930 was recorded on the front page of the *Staffordshire Evening Sentinel* published on that day. This is what the newspaper had to say about him:

"We regret to announce the death, which occurred this morning at Ivydene, St. George's-road, Rhos-on-Sea, of Mr. Andrew Frederick Rock formerly of Queen's-road, Hartshill, Stoke-on-Trent.

"Mr. Rock, who was 70 years of age, entered the service of the North Staffordshire Railway Company in 1871 as a telegraph learner, and was transferred to the technical staff in 1876. He rose through various grades to be Chief Electrical Assistant to the late Mr. John Neale, whom he succeeded as Telegraph Superintendent and Electrical Engineer in 1902.

Andrew Frederick Rock (1859-1930) in a portrait by E. Harrison & Son of Newcastle-under-Lyme published in 1914.

Photo]
[E. Harrison & Son.
MR. ANDREW F. ROCK,
Electrical Engineer: North Staffordshire Railway.

"His rise in the service was the reward of hard and conscientious work and proved ability. He retired some years ago. He was held in the highest respect by members of all grades in the railway service, and by a very wide circle of friends, by whom his death will be deeply regretted.

"Mr. Rock was a well-known Freemason.[1] He was a member of Gordon Lodge, Hanley, and passed through the chair in 1912. Some years later he became Provincial Grand Supt. of Works.

"The funeral will take place at Hartshill Cemetery on Tuesday afternoon."

It must have taken a great deal of study and determination to progress from being a junior telegraph clerk at Black Bull to become a Chief Officer on The Knotty's senior management team. This article records his achievements.

Family history

Andrew Frederick Rock was born at Stoke on 15th May 1859 and baptised on 5th June that year at the town's St. Peter ad Vincula church. He was the son of potter's warehouseman Andrew Rock (1828-1894) and Maria Smith (1830-1887). On 19th July 1881 at St. Peter ad Vincula he married Mary Margaret Bould who was born in Uttoxeter on 24th September 1859. They had four children – one daughter and three sons. Very interestingly, Mary was also employed by the NSR as a teacher of telegraphy, being described as such in the 1881 census. She joined the NSR on 28th June 1880 and resigned on 25th June 1881 shortly before her marriage to Andrew; maybe they first met at work. Moreover, Andrew's younger sister, Maria Rock (1865-1941), was also employed by the NSR in the Telegraph Department. She was very much a career lady. Already employed by the NSR as a Telegraph Clerk in 1881 at the early age of fourteen, by 1911 she had become a Telegraph Instructress, still holding that position in 1921. The Rocks were clearly into modern technology.

In 1891 Andrew Frederick Rock with his wife and family were living at 23 Queen Ann Street, Hanley, but by 1901 they had moved to Denholme, Queen's Road, Hartshill, and continued to live there after Andrew's retirement. His first wife died on 20th March 1925. During the following year on 30th August he married Agnes Burnett in North Wales. Agnes, a farmer's daughter, was born in Little Aston, Staffordshire, on 15th June 1868. Andrew's death occurred at their Welsh home at Ivydene, Rhos-on-Sea, Colwyn Bay, Denbighshire, on 29th March 1930. His funeral took place at Hartshill Cemetery at Stoke on 1st April 1930 which is where his first wife's funeral had taken place on 24th March 1925. Agnes died at Wednesbury, Staffordshire, on 25th January 1949. She is buried in St. Peter's churchyard at Wednesbury.

John Neale (1833-1901)

Before pursuing Rock's achievements, it would be appropriate to say something about his predecessor, John Neale. He was born in London and was baptised in the Parish of St. Dunstan, Stepney, on 13th October 1833. His father was a cooper. He was educated at Trinity School, Bow, and joined the services of the Electric and International Telegraph Company in 1851 at its Strand Office in London, transferring to Stafford in 1852, Manchester in 1853 and Birmingham in 1854. He married Mary Godsell at Tower Hamlets, Middlesex, on 31st January 1858 and they had six children – two daughters and four sons. During the following year, he was appointed Inspector in charge of telegraph lines in the Midland Counties. On 18th January 1870 he was appointed by the NSR as Telegraph Superintendent[2] at a salary of £200 per annum. The 1871 and 1881 census returns indicate that he was living at Hartshill but the 1891 census reveals that he had moved to No.6 Winton Square in one of the company's distinguished houses opposite Stoke station. His first wife died in 1896 and he married again on 25th August 1897 in the South Staffordshire Parish of Armitage. His second wife was Sarah Elizabeth Perks (1856-1921). They lived at Wychdon Villa, Hixon, near Stafford, which is where, after a brief illness, he died on 18th December 1901. His move from Winton Square to Hixon was significant as his former home was converted into offices to accommodate the increasing number of staff in his department. His new home was very close to Hixon station on the NSR's main line from Stoke to Colwich.

Back in 1872 he became an Associate of the Institution of Electrical Engineers and in 1877 he was elected as a Member. The Institution published his obituary which included the following:

"In 1873 he patented the acoustic Single Needle dial, which is now used by the Post Office and railways, and a single wire block instrument which is now in use on the North Staffordshire Railway; also a recording block instrument for permissive block use, showing the number of trains actually in the section, and a rail treadle so that the trains can announce their approach at level crossings automatically. Mr. Neale also acted as Honorary Secretary to the Conference of Railway Telegraph Engineers and Superintendents at their half-yearly meetings."

The Railway Magazine in its issue for February 1899 featured an interview with William Douglas Phillipps (1839-1933), the NSR's General Manager.[3] He was very complimentary about John Neale's achievements commenting that in 1893 the NSR commenced electric light installations and that Stoke station "was credited with the best lighted platform existing". Moreover, he said that electric power was used for driving

1859-1930 THE KNOTTY'S TELEGRAPH TRICAL ENGINEER

BY MIKE G. FELL OBE

machinery in the engineering shops by means of motors and for working an electric crane for loading and unloading goods. In addition, water was electrically boiled in the refreshment rooms which the General Manager believed was a novelty not found elsewhere on a British railway! Moreover, the company's offices were warmed by electric radiators. He concluded by saying to the interviewer: "I am sure you will find that we have quite kept pace with the progress which electrical science has made in the last few years, and the North Staffordshire Railway claims to be as well equipped with all electrical appliances as any railway." All this was attributed to John Neale.

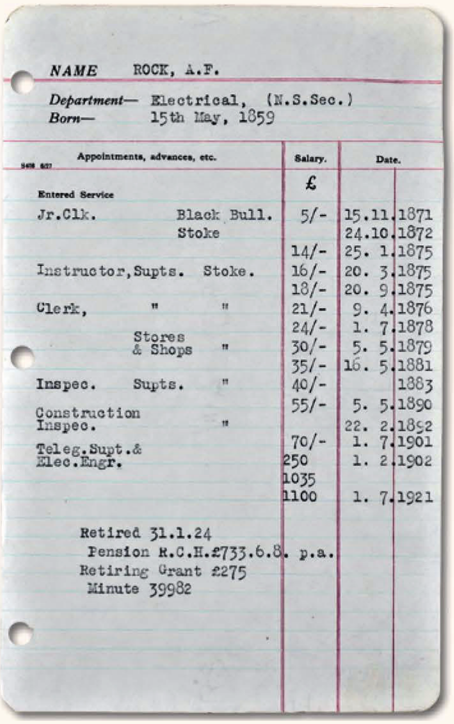
Rock's achievements

Neale's act was a hard act to follow but Andrew Frederick Rock – a 'Knotty' man born and bred – certainly fitted the bill. His career and his salary progression is neatly summarised in the accompanying LMS staff record. By 1907, the NSR Electrical Department comprised at least 38 members of staff, all of whom were members of the Railway Clearing System Superannuation Fund.[4] Rock's Chief Assistant was Colin George Blackburn Roberts (1863-1931) and his Chief Outdoor Assistant was Henry Anderson Lewis (1861-1946). *The Railway Magazine* for July 1914 contained a very comprehensive article entitled 'Electric Machinery and Appliances on the North Staffordshire Railway'. It was written by C. Dean from the NSR's Electrical Department. The article featured a photograph of Rock taken by E. Harrison & Son of Newcastle-under-Lyme which is also reproduced herewith. C. Dean was Charles Thomas Dean (1871-1922) who was the Department's Chief Clerk.[5] He was Rock's right-hand man who, amongst his many other duties, helped to organise and attended many of the Electrical Department's annual dinners which commenced under Neale's regime in 1898. Charles Dean no doubt submitted his article with Rock's full approval.

Some, but not all, of the following information is based on Dean's article in *The Railway Magazine*.[6] It commenced as follows: "During the twelve years that Mr. Andrew F. Rock has held the position of Telegraph Superintendent and Electrical Engineer of the North Staffordshire Railway considerable advances have been made in the application of electricity to the various purposes of that railway. In addition to the telegraphs of the company, Mr. Rock has the supervision of the various electric light and power stations, electric cranes, capstans and lifts, electric lighting of trains, oil tail and side lamps, and both electrical and mechanical clocks."

Telegraphy

By 1914 there were about 900 telephones in use over 206 miles of railway and the number of them was constantly increasing. There were also nearly 3,000 other electrical instruments in use, including telegraph and block signalling instruments, with over 10,000 batteries, which were almost exclusively in the form of dry cells. The whole of the railway had been equipped with Tyer's three-position



NAME ROCK, A.F.

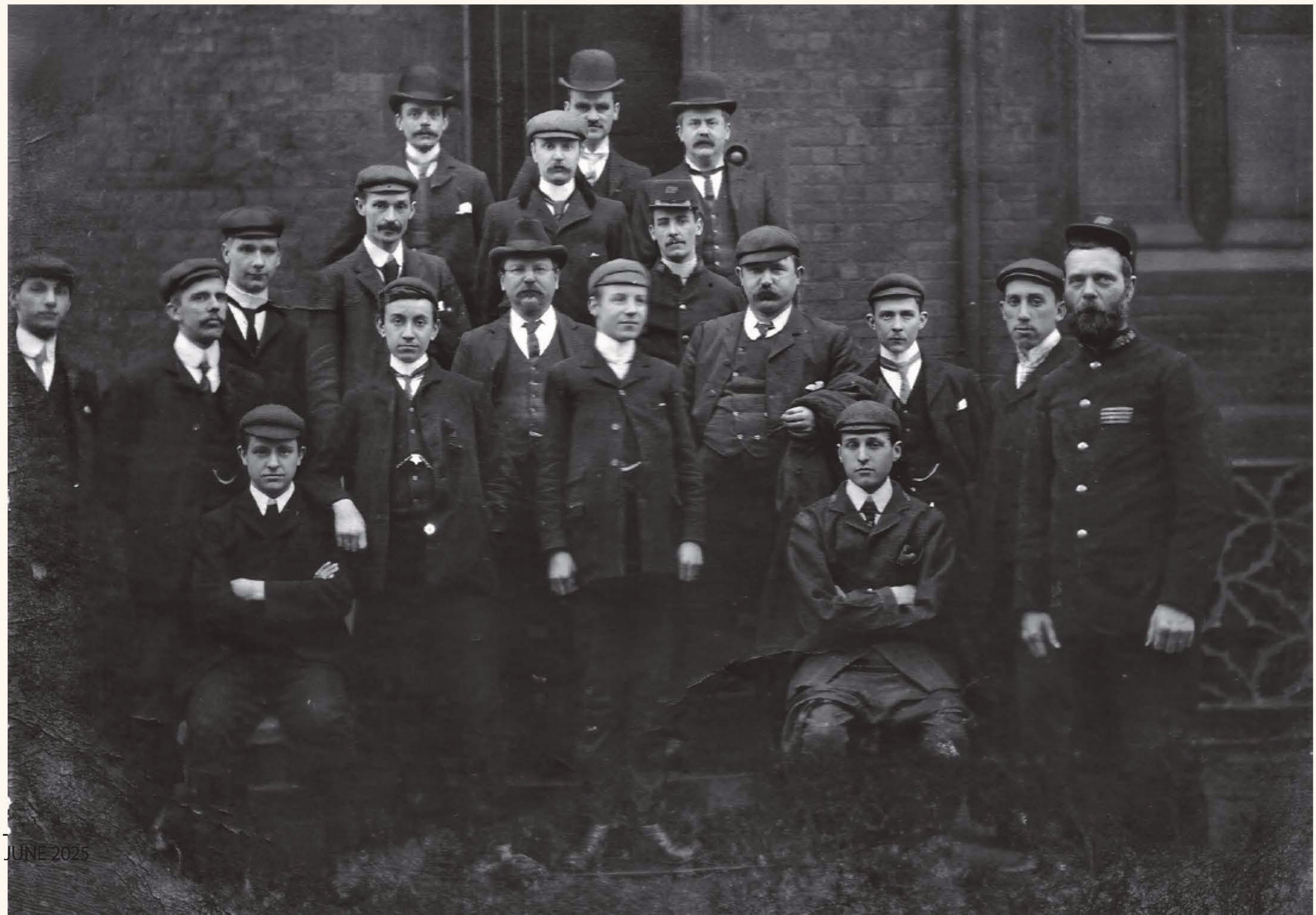
Department— Electrical, (N.S.Sec.)
Born— 15th May, 1859

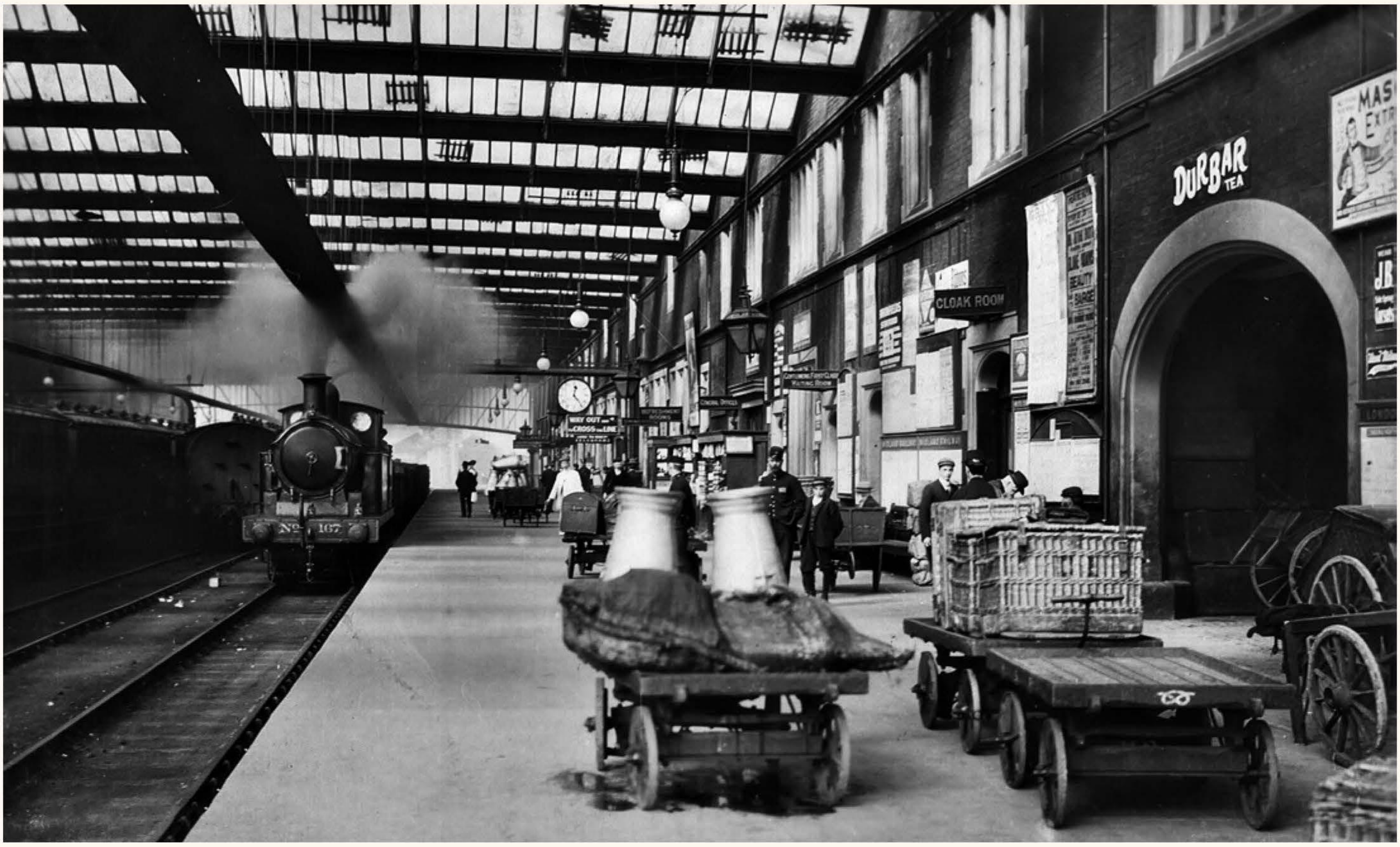
Appointments, advances, etc.			Salary.	Date.
			£	
Entered Service				
Jr.Clk.		Black Bull.	5/-	15.11.1871
		Stoke		24.10.1872
			14/-	25. 1.1875
Instructor,Supts.		Stoke.	16/-	20. 3.1875
			18/-	20. 9.1875
Clerk,	"	"	21/-	9. 4.1876
			24/-	1. 7.1878
	Stores & Shops	"	30/-	5. 5.1879
			35/-	16. 5.1881
Inspec.	Supts.	"	40/-	1883
			55/-	5. 5.1890
Construction Inspec.		"		22. 2.1892
Teleg.Supt.& Elec.Engr.			70/-	1. 7.1901
			250	1. 2.1902
			1035	
			1100	1. 7.1921

Retired 31.1.24
Pension R.C.H.£733.6.8. p.a.
Retiring Grant £275
Minute 39982

This is a copy of the LMS staff record recording Rock's career, his date of retirement and his pension details. (National Archives/ancestry.co.uk)

A bespectacled Andrew Rock features here on a commercial postcard posted at Stoke-on-Trent on 23rd June 1904. He is positioned with members of his staff and a postman outside No.6 Winton Square which became the home of the NSR's Electrical Department. (Courtesy, Gerald Worland)





This is Stoke station in its heyday looking north along Platform 1. The approaching goods train is paralleled along the platform by a serried row of modern global electric lights and this is the platform where the water in the restaurant room was electrically boiled and the company's offices had electric radiators. The slave clock made by J. B. Joyce of Whitchurch was installed in 1894 and was one of many for which Andrew Rock had the responsibility of maintaining. The locomotive is Class L 0-6-2T No.167 built by the Vulcan Foundry, maker's number 1893, in December 1903. It was withdrawn by the LMS as No.2244 in May 1935. The porter's trolley to the right, with the pigeon baskets, bears the classic Staffordshire Knot. (The late Basil Jeuda Collection)

single-wire block instruments, replacing the old two-position instruments. It had been anticipated that by the increased use of telephones a considerable reduction would be made in the number of telegrams, but that had not proved to be the case and during 1913 the total number of messages transmitted by telegraph amounted to 1,390,000, including 166,000 postal telegrams. The NSR for many years had encouraged the public telegraph business and at stations where there were no appointed telegraph clerks gave a premium to station masters, booking clerks and signalmen, according to the number of such telegrams dealt with by them during each year. The general public were most appreciative of this facility although it was rather self-defeating when the Postmaster-General installed telegraph instruments or telephones in local post offices, taking the business away from the railway company.

Traffic control

Track circuits were being installed at a rapid rate and it was anticipated that all the principal locations on the railway would soon be protected in this manner.

Signal lamps

By 1914 all the signal lamps at Stoke station were lit by electricity, replacing the usual oil lamps and the system was then being extended between the section of railway from Pratts Sidings to Grange Junction, a distance of about 3½ miles and embracing over 300 signals. The signals at Uttoxeter were also lit by electricity but, ironically, the LMS later converted them back to oil!

Carriage lighting

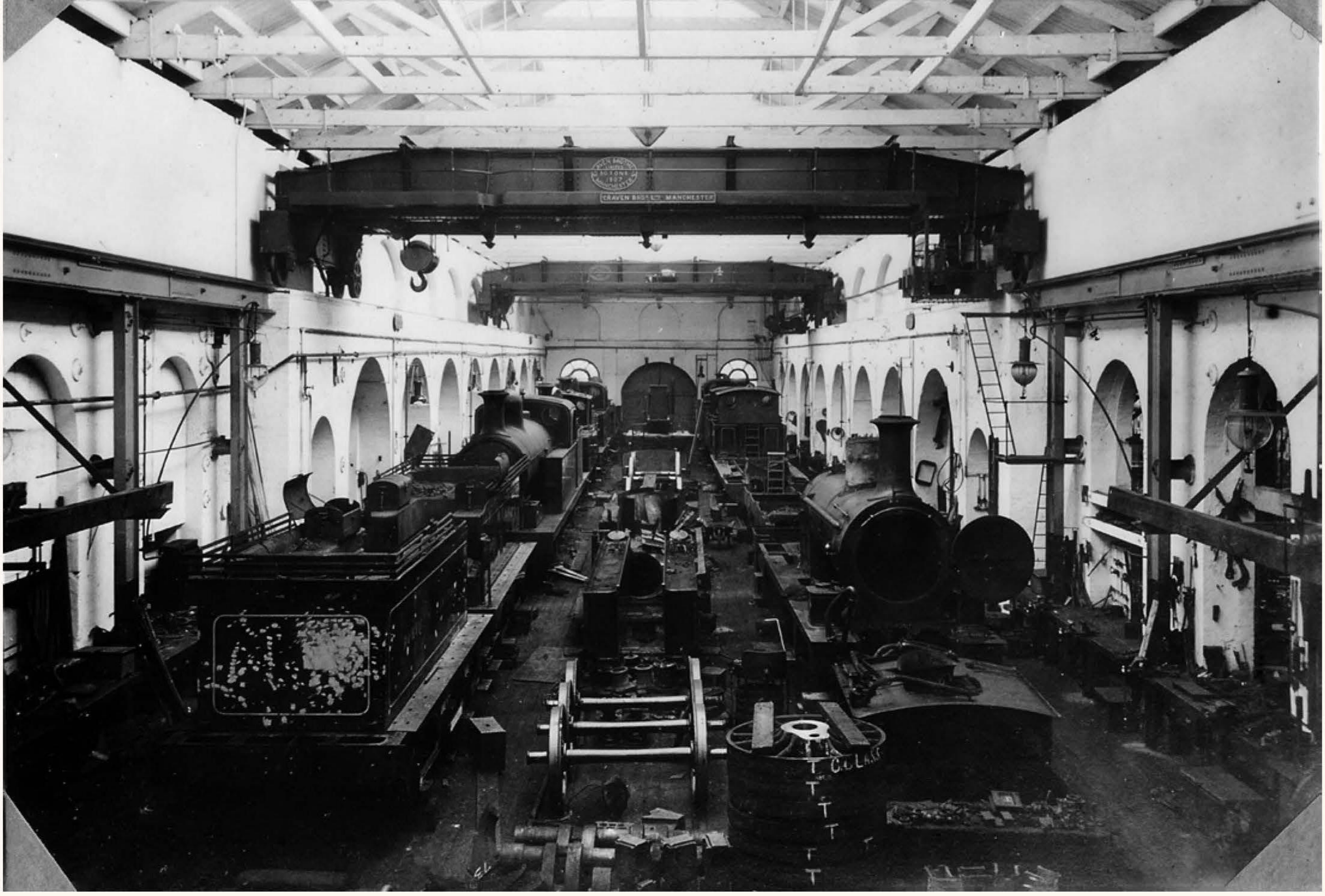
The NSR was the first British steam-operated railway to have the whole of its passenger stock lit by electricity. Moreover, it was the first on which the electric lighting of trains was placed under the care of the electrical department, rather than the carriage department. Unlike most other railway companies, the NSR did not adopt gas lighting in its carriages but changed straight from oil lamps to electricity. In 1893 the decision was taken to equip all new carriages built at Stoke with electric lights but progress was somewhat academic as it seems that up to 1897 only one such new vehicle had been built. However, on 28th April 1896 the NSR Traffic & Finance Committee agreed that electric lighting should be fitted to a directors' carriage as an experiment and on 9th November 1897 the same Committee agreed that a block Loop Line train of eight carriages should be equipped at a cost of £250.[7] Thereafter, conversion of existing stock gathered pace. By February 1903 some 115 carriages had been lit with electricity which was about half the total in use at that time.[8] The system adopted was produced by J. Stone & Company and on the Loop Line sets only the brake vans at either end of the set carried dynamos and accumulators, which meant that there was very little reserve of power and the lights would become very dim as the trains struggled with greasy rails and stiff gradients. No doubt one of the penalties of being a pioneer! By 1909 the *Staffordshire Sentinel* was waxing lyrical about the quality of 39 new bogie carriages then in service and gave extensive coverage to two types of saloon about to be put into traffic to work to and from Chester during race week.[9] Amongst other splendid attributes, for night travelling each of the saloons was fitted with five electric cluster lights having three in each cluster each of ten candle power, or 150 candle power in all. What luxury, what illumination!

Generating stations

The company had established five electricity generating stations. These were located at Stoke, Hanley, Longton, Uttoxeter and Chatterley. The latter was used in connection with two accumulator barges used to power the tugs used on the Trent & Mersey Canal through Telford's tunnel at Harecastle. At Longport goods station six electric cranes and two electric capstans were worked from the Corporation supply, as were two cranes at Tunstall, four capstans at Newcastle-under-Lyme and four capstans and one crane at Leek. The Corporation mains were also used to supply electric travelling cranes located at the locomotive workshops and Stoke roundhouse for the purpose of lifting locomotives. The same supply source was also used to power two cranes at the locomotive coaling stage which had been converted from mechanical operation.

Stoke Generating Station

This was the NSR's most important generating station. It was situated under the buildings on the down platform (Platform 2)

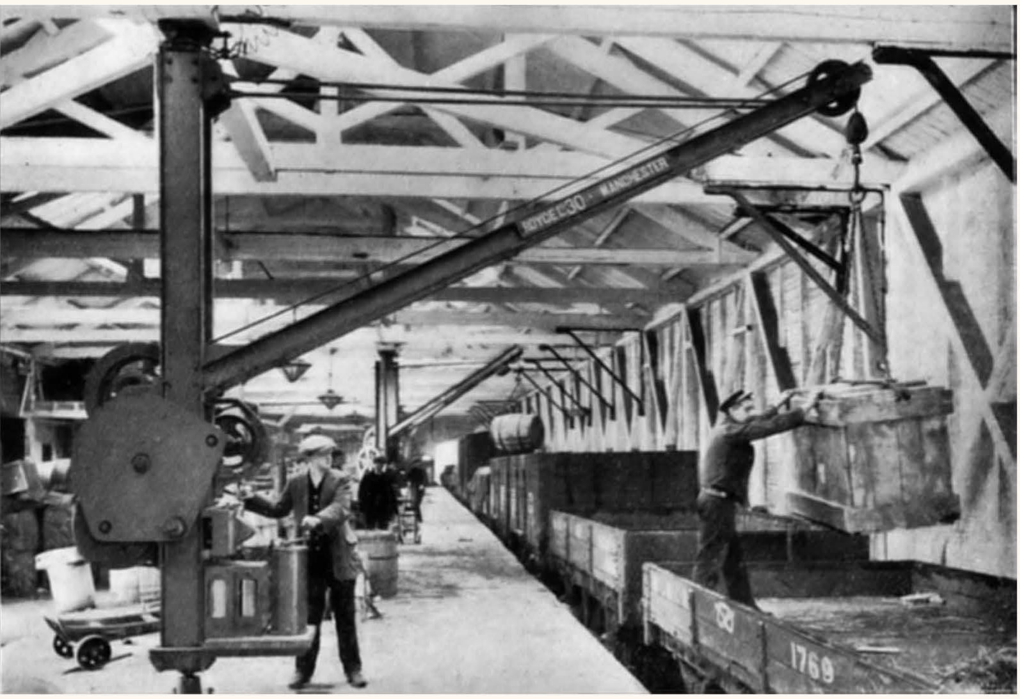


Stoke Locomotive works received a municipal electricity supply. This view shows the erecting shop and illustrates two electric overhead gantry cranes built by Craven Brothers Limited of Manchester in 1907. They had a lifting capacity of 30 tons and were equipped with motors from the Lancashire Dynamo and Motor Company for hoisting, traversing and longitudinal travelling. (MANIFOLD Collection)

and was brought into use in 1893. Initially, the plant consisted of one 60hp Davey, Paxman semi-marine boiler, two Bumstead & Chandler 30bhp single-acting vertical high-speed steam engines and two Gulcher continuous direct current 110 Volt dynamos, rated at 180 amps. This was soon found to be too small for the requirements of the station and in 1895 another boiler was added, with two additional engines and dynamos of the same description and capacity as those first installed, with the exception that the generators were by Johnson & Phillips. By 1903 the demand for lighting and power had so increased that it was necessary to add further capacity to the plant. Two of the engines and dynamos were replaced by two Bumstead & Chandler compound double-acting vertical high-speed steam engines of 50 and 65bhp and Royce generators of 35 and 46kW. A Lancashire 120hp boiler was also fixed in 1908, together with a 69bhp Bumstead & Chandler steam engine and Royce 220 Volt, 46 kW dynamo.

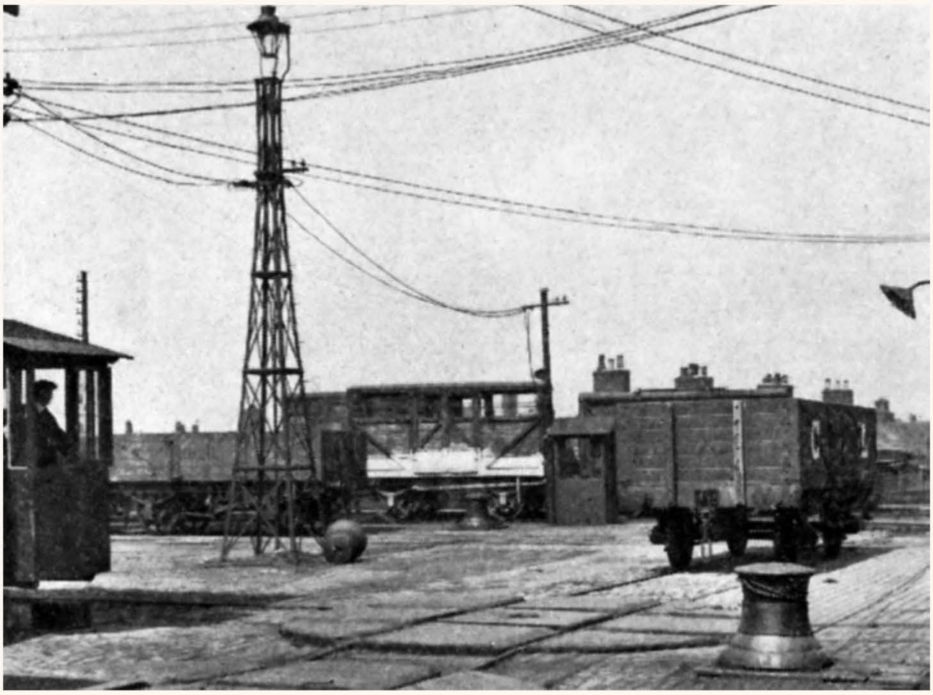
In those days, the electricity supply at Stoke station was mostly at 110 Volts but the 220 Volt generator was used for lighting the new suite of offices built in 1910 on the site of the old post office and for supplying lighting and power to the sidings, carriage sheds, carriage repair workshops, mortar mills and bridge builders' workshops, etc at Cockshott[10] about half a mile distant to the north. The General Post Office at Stoke built on NSR land and opened on 2nd April 1909 was also supplied with electricity by the railway company. The construction of a new power plant at Stoke was commenced in 1920, even though the forthcoming grouping of the railways was becoming a certainty.

A Royce 1½-ton crane in operation lowering a crate on to a NSR 2-plank wagon No.1769 in Longport goods shed. A Royce 3-ton crane is in operation in the distance.



Hanley Generating Station

The generating plant at Hanley was installed at the goods station and was brought into use in 1897. It consisted of one 30bhp Premier gas engine and one 27½bhp Crossley gas engine, working on town gas, with two 22½kW 110-115 Volt General Electric 4-pole dynamos and 58 chloride accumulators. In addition to the lighting of the goods warehouse and offices, bonded stores, goods yard and passenger station, the plant at Hanley also supplied power for working four electric capstans and seven electric cranes. When first installed, the capstans at Hanley were of the pedal-controlled non-reversing type on which loose hemp ropes were used. Three of these built by Royce Limited were subsequently rebuilt to the reversible bollard type, each with a fixed extra-flexible ½in diameter steel wire rope of 250ft in length, the controller, of the standard tramway type, being fixed in a



Capstans and their control cabins in Hanley goods yard with a Cheshire Lines six-plank wagon by the nearest capstan and wagon turntable.

small cabin near to each capstan. This type of capstan showed a decided economy in the maintenance cost of ropes and proved to be far safer than the pedal-controlled capstans with loose hemp ropes. Several mishaps, some involving broken limbs, had occurred involving the use of the latter with men getting entangled in the coils of rope and also when the winding rope was over-wound which resulted in the swinging round of the coupling hook. The modified type of capstan became typical of those adopted elsewhere on the NSR system.

The electric jib cranes at Hanley were built by Royce Limited, each consisting of a centre post carried in a cast iron footstep embedded in concrete at the bottom with a cast iron bearing at the top, fixed to the roof of the building. The jibs were built up of mild steel channels and flat bars securely braced and riveted together. The centre post carried the hoisting gear, also the motor and tramway type controller, together with the main switch and fuse. On a 1½-ton capacity crane the load was lifted by a ½in diameter flexible plough steel wire rope with a breaking strain of about eight tons. The hoisting motion was actuated by a 7½bhp totally enclosed, direct-current compound-wound four-pole reversing motor, driving, through spur gearing, the cast iron rope barrel which was carried on a mild steel shaft. The slewing was done by pushing the load around by hand. A powerful automatic magnetic brake was applied at all times except when the motor was actually hoisting the load and this brake was provided with a hand lever for lowering the load by gravity at any required speed. The empty hook was lowered by reversing the motor. There was hand gear for use in case the motor or the supply of direct current failed.

Longton Generating Station

The Longton generating plant consisted of two 27½bhp Crossley gas engines, working on town gas, with two 22½kW 110-150 Volt General Electric dynamos and 58 Tudor accumulators. The plant supplied light to the passenger station, goods warehouse, offices and yard, also power for four Royce cranes and five Royce capstans. There were also two electric lifts for luggage at the passenger station, but these were worked by direct current from the municipal supply.

Uttoxeter Generating Station

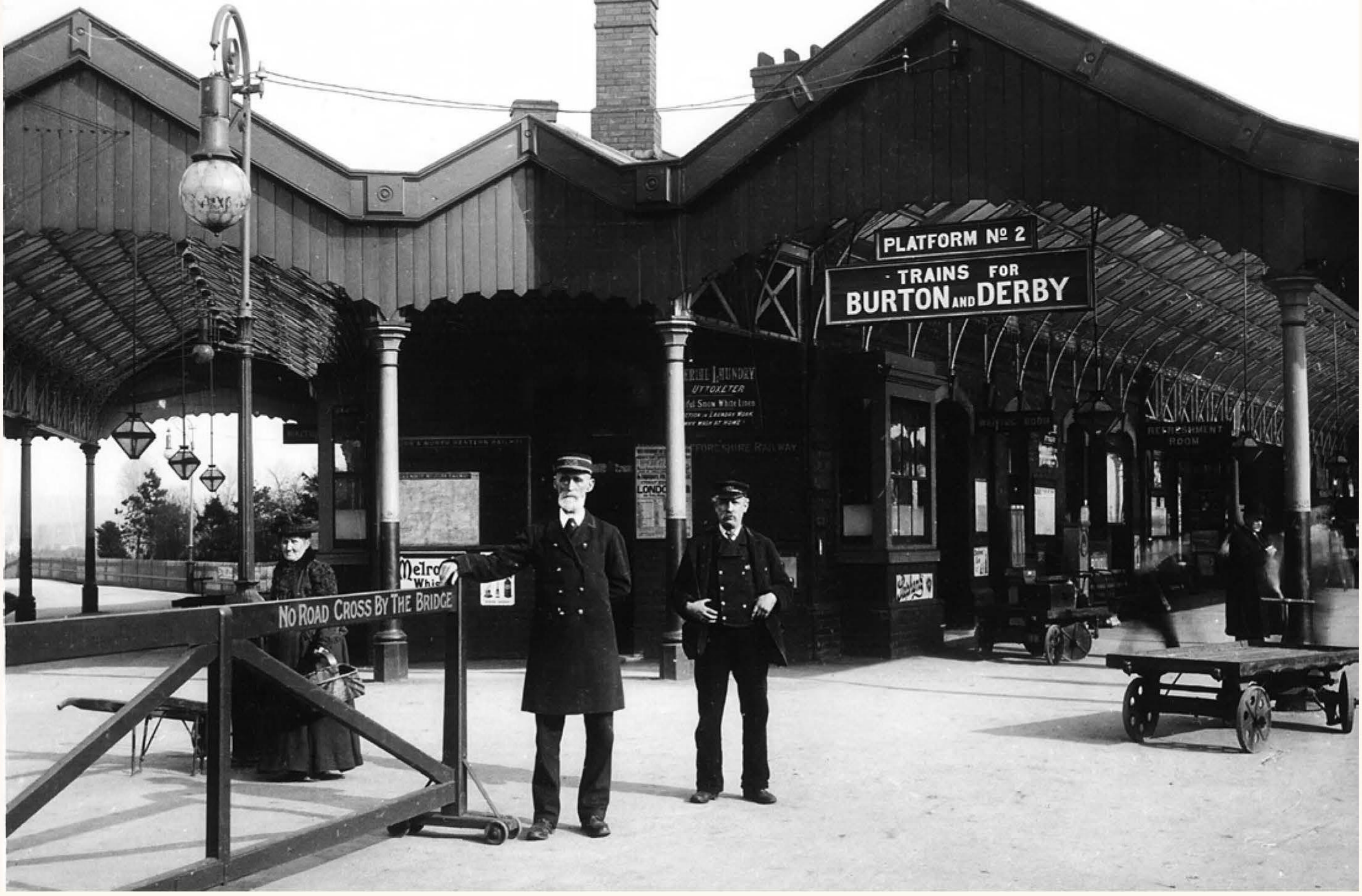
During the evening of 18th October 1904, Andrew Rock switched on, for the first time, the electric lighting at Uttoxeter station. It was reported to be very satisfactory and a great improvement on the previous gas lighting arrangements and evinced much interest and pleasure from the townspeople.[11] There were eighteen arc and over 40 incandescent lamps at the station. Moreover, the system was soon extended to the goods warehouse, yard and new locomotive shed which had been opened in 1901. The system was supplied by a steam plant consisting of two locomotive-type boilers, two Bumsted & Chandler's single acting high-speed engines and the two Johnson & Phillips' 110 Volt 180 amp continuous direct dynamos (which had been displaced from the Stoke Generating Station) and 60 Fuller's block accumulators. The use of electricity was later extended to power the capstans and cranes.

Chatterley Generating Station and Electric Tugs

This installation was rather different as it facilitated the movement of narrow boats assisted by electric-powered tug through one of the two Harecastle Canal tunnels. The tunnels were, of course, an integral part of the Trent & Mersey Navigation which the NSR owned. Just prior to the First World War there was a lot of controversy about whether the canal would be able to continue to carry the available volume of traffic through the tunnels. The first tunnel engineered by James Brindley (1716-1772) was opened after his death in 1775 and the second built by Thomas Telford (1757-1834) opened in 1827. Both tunnels had been subject to mining subsidence over the years and were incurring frequent stoppages for repairs.

On 24th October 1911 the NSR's Traffic & Finance Committee received a deputation from four canal carrying companies and the North Staffordshire Chamber of Commerce about the problems associated with the Harecastle tunnels, suggesting a canal

As seen here, capstans and their control cabins were still in use at Newcastle goods yard on 23rd January 1965. The bridge under King Street seen in the centre of the photograph had very restricted headroom which made capstan operation ideal as only a very limited number of locomotive classes could pass under the bridge. The bridge, which formerly spanned the Newcastle-under-Lyme Canal, had a clearance of 11ft 8in compared with the normal NSR loading gauge of 13ft 5in.

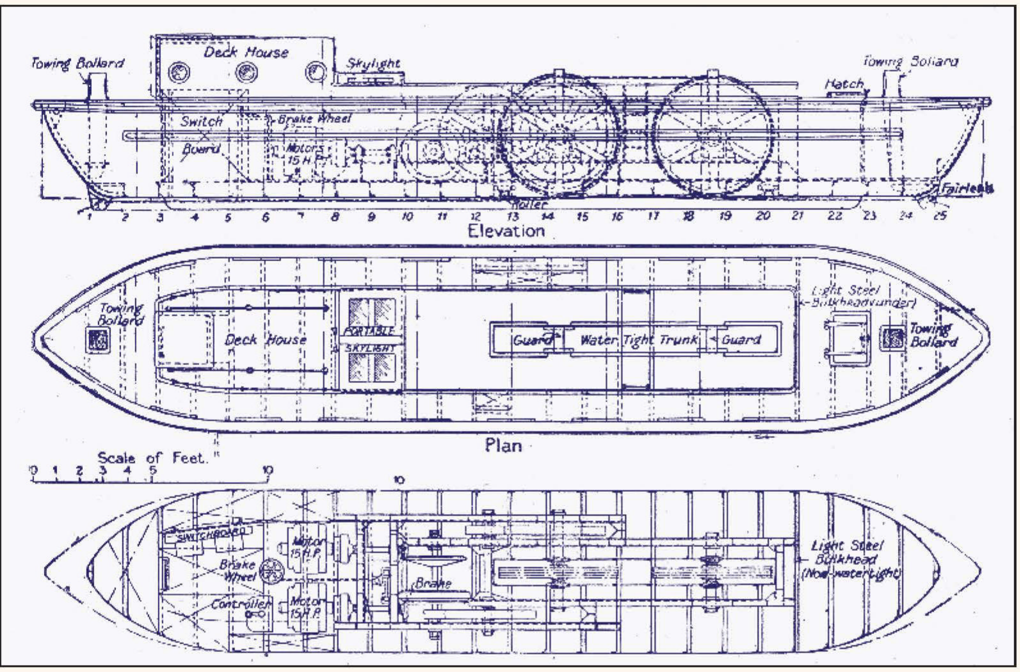

PLATFORM No 2
TRAINS FOR
BURTON AND DERBY
NO ROAD CROSS BY THE BRIDGE

Andrew Rock switched on his new electric lighting at Uttoxeter station for the first time on 18th October 1904. There were eighteen arc lamps and one of them is very prominent in this photograph which dates from around 1908. Also prominent is station master Thomas Mellor (1842-1921) and close the new electric light is his wife Emma, née Mottershead, who was born in North Wales. Thomas Mellor retired after nearly 57 years NSR service in October 1909.

diversion as the solution. Pressure mounted in January 1912 when Telford's tunnel had to be closed for a period so that further repairs could to be carried out. Others got involved including the local authorities who appointed John Arthur Saner (1864-1952) as an independent engineer to investigate the possible deviation. He was Engineer to the Weaver Navigation Trustees who had a vested interest in the deviation so he could hardly be described as independent! A great deal of pressure was being exerted behind the scenes for a diversionary route avoiding the tunnels and foremost amongst the advocates for such a route was the NSR's own Canal Engineer, Harry Curbishley (1864-1931). He actually pushed the idea too far for his own good as such a diversion was proving far too costly to justify the large capital investment, which resulted in him getting his knuckles rapped! This issue was still rumbling on in 1913 when General Manager, William Douglas Phillips (1839-1933), following great assistance from Andrew Rock, announced the solution! This was to repair the Telford Tunnel to a high standard and equip it with electric tug haulage – a master stroke which quickly gained the support of everyone, including, it seems, Harry Curbishley.[12]

A steel tug was purchased from Bullivant & Company Limited of Millwall and the scheme involved the laying of a fixed steel rope on the bottom of the tunnel invert and anchored at both ends. The rope was two inches in circumference and 3,500 yards long. It passed over two 5ft diameter winding drums mounted on the tug, one in front of the other in a watertight channel. The drums were operated by two 15hp electric motors so pulling the vessel and its train of narrow boats along. There was no other means of steering. The tug had a length of 40ft, a beam of 7ft with a draught of 3ft. The hull was of steel plate construction but two wooden fenders were fitted to prevent the steel rubbing against the brickwork supporting the tunnel towpath.

An outline diagram of the electrically powered tug for the haulage system adopted through Telford's Harecastle tunnel. (*The Railway and Travel Monthly,* August 1918)


Towing Bollard
Deck House
Skylight
Towing Bollard
Hatch
Switch
Board
Brake Wheel
Motors 15 H.P.
Roller
Fairleads
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
Elevation
Towing Bollard
Deck House
Portable Skylight
Guard
Water Tight Trunk
Guard
Light Steel Bulkhead (under)
Towing Bollard
Plan
Scale of Feet.
0 1 2 3 4 5
10
Switchboard
Brake Wheel
Controller
Motor 15 H.P.
Motor 15 H.P.
Brake
Light Steel Bulkhead (Non-watertight)

Power for the motors was obtained from one of two accumulator barges towed immediately behind the tug. The accumulator barges were built in the NSR's boatyard at Stone and were 72ft in length. They both contained 115 chloride cells which were housed in lead-lined teak boxes in order to protect them from rain and drips from the tunnel roof. The barges, which carried a light at both ends, had to be manoeuvred round the tug at the conclusion of each trip. While one of them was in use, the other would be moored outside the generating station at Chatterley so that the accumulator cells could be recharged, an operation which lasted several days.

The generating station housed two 70bhp gas engines and two dynamos which, when turning at 600rpm, produced 45kW. The gas engines were supplied by Campbell, the dynamos by General Electric and the tug motors by Royce. The NSR Electrical Department co-ordinated the entire electrical installation and installed the switchgear. The system was a great success, enabling Brindley's tunnel to be taken out of use in 1918. In 1930 the LMS provided an additional tug. This heralded the demise of the accumulator barges and the abandonment of the Chatterley generating station, with electricity being provided by the newly established North West Joint Electricity Authority via an overhead wire suspended from the tunnel roof. The overhead wire system remained in use with electricity supplied by the Midlands Electricity Board until 1954 when the tug service was abandoned in favour of a forced system of ventilation which remains in use to this day, permitting the operation of diesel driven narrowboats.

Battery electric locomotive

Only two locomotives from the NSR fleet have survived and one of them can be attributed to Andrew Rock. The Knotty's battery locomotive was conceived in 1916 and built at Stoke Works during the following year. It was placed on view for inspection at Stoke on 16th October 1917.[14] Its appearance prompted articles in *The Locomotive, The Engineer, The Railway Gazette* and *The Railway Magazine*.[15] The most detailed report featured in *The Locomotive* and is quoted verbatim below.

"For shunting duties in the Oakamoor Copper Works of Messrs. Thos. Bolton & Sons Ltd., a neat electric battery locomotive has been recently completed at the Locomotive Works of the North Staffordshire Ry., at Stoke-on-Trent, to the joint specification and design of Mr. A. F. Rock, electrical engineer to the Railway Company, and Mr. J. A. Hookham, locomotive engineer.

The principal structural dimensions are – wheelbase, which of course is rigid, 8ft; diameter of wheels, 3ft 1in; length over buffers, 19ft 8in; overall width 8ft 4½in; height to top of cab, 9ft 3⅜in. The underframe is of channel iron. Brake power, operated by a hand screw, is applied by band brakes fitted to each axle. The body and cab are of wood, braced with iron, the covers over the battery compartments being arranged to drain off all rain water, while both sections are so ventilated that gases given off during charging or working the battery are carried away.

"The electrical equipment was supplied by the D. P. Battery Company Ltd. of Bakewell and consists of two motors – one per axle – of the British Thomson Houston Company's G.E. 58 type. These are two turn series wound, up to 250 Volts, each rated at 27 BHP on 160 Volts, 36 BHP on 216 Volts and 41 BHP on 250 Volts, this rating being one hour with a temperature rise not exceeding 75°C. The spur gear wheels are of a ratio of 4 to 6.

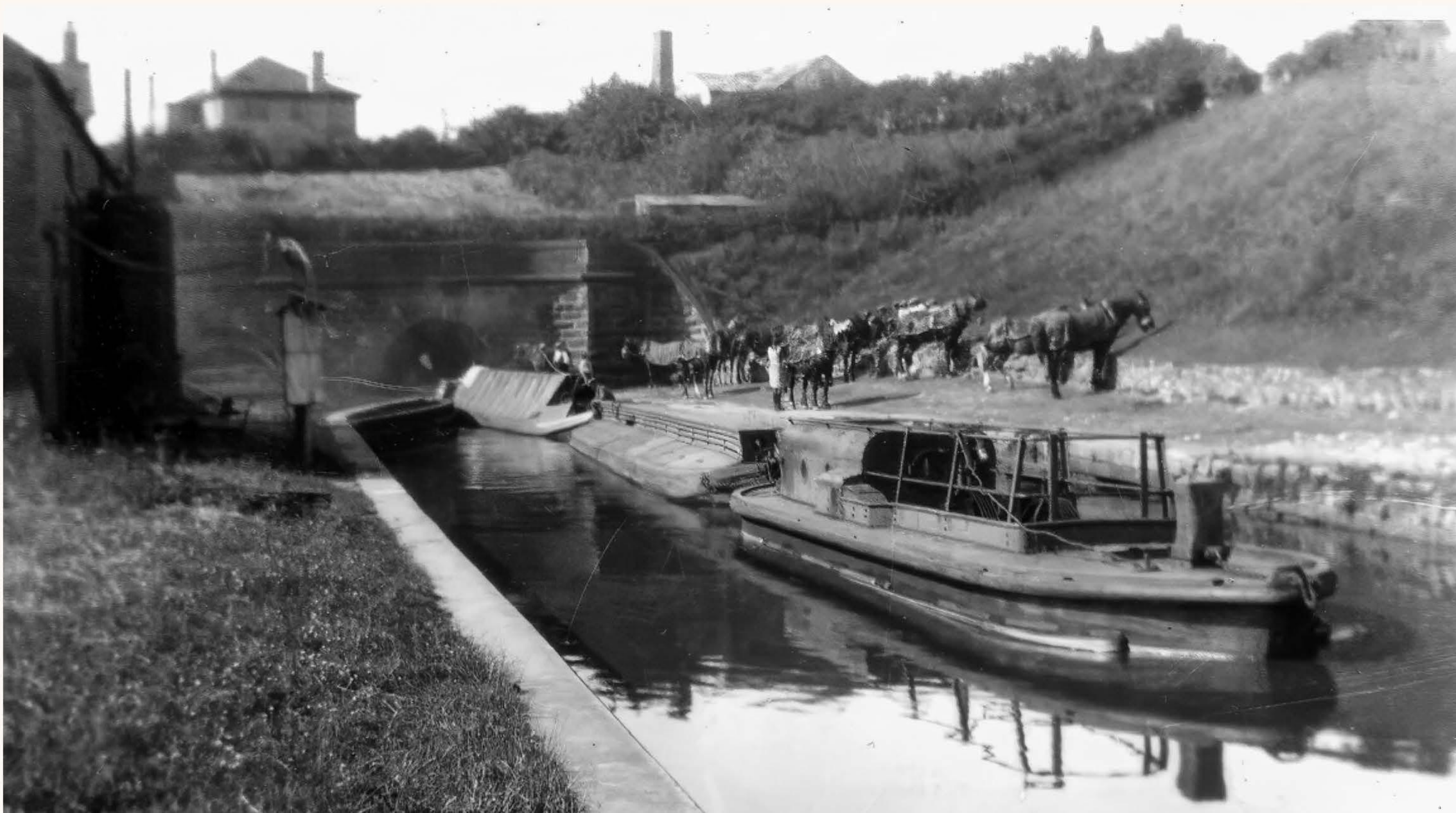
"The motors are suspended on the outside of the locomotive axles from channel iron girders across the underframe, with brass bushed bearings on the locomotive axles, while the spur wheels work into gear wheels which are keyed on to the axles. The motors are capable of hauling 90 tons behind, at 10 miles per hour on the level or 72 tons at 11 miles per hour, in addition to the weight of the locomotive, which is 17 tons. They are controlled from the cab by a tramway type series parallel controller through two grid resistances fixed under the floor. The controller has a separate forward and reverse handle, in addition to the control handle, also a switch to cut out either of the motors in case of the failure of one. Separate magnetic blow-outs are provided for each contact. An automatic circuit breaker and a double pole change-over and discharge switch are also fixed in the cab within reach of the driver. There are also a 0-300 range volt meter and a 300-0-300 range ammeter fixed within his view and six small circuit switches for the lighting circuits. These consist of cab light, portable light and four head lights, which are fixed in bulk head fittings over each buffer. The coupler socket for charging is fixed on the outside, under the top step and the main fuse box outside on the underframe.

"The battery consists of 108 21-plate cells of the D. P. Battery Company's train lighting type. The positive plates are of Planté type ¾in thick. The negatives are of the 'sponge' or 'box' pattern. The boxes are of teak with lead linings and fitted with split block type lids, rubber gaskets, vent plugs and acid level floats.

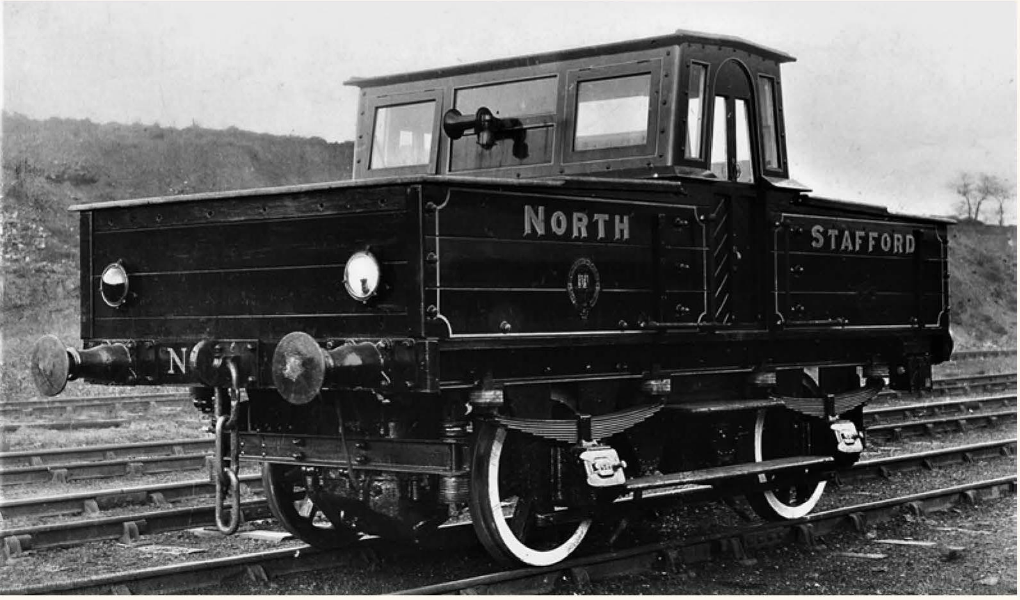
"The plates resting on the D. P. Battery Company's special four-bar bottom blocks are 2in above the bottom of the cell box. The separation between the plates is made of treated ribbed wood sheets. Each section has double plugs and is connected with flexible copper connectors with lead lugs and lead-coated bolts. They are fixed in the compartments on either side of the driver's cab, each on four porcelain double insulators, the bottom halves of which are sunk in wood strips secured to the floor. The cells are divided from each other by special wood corner separators, which have an air space of ⅝in around each cell. The capacity of this battery is as follows:

30 ampères for 10 hours
to 1·8 Volts per cell
50 ampères for 5 hours
to 1·8 Volts per cell
71 ampères for 3 hours
to 1·8 Volts per cell
150 ampères for 1 hour
to 1·75 volts per cell
300 ampères for 1 minute
375 ampères for 3 seconds

"The charging rate is 30 to 60 ampères. The weight of one cell, complete with acid, is 132lb and the total weight of the battery is



The electric tug, with its accumulator barge, is seen here at the Chatterley end of Telford's tunnel with a string of narrow boats in tow. The horses have been walked over the hill via Boat Horse Road and are waiting to take the boats onwards to their destinations.
(SLS Library Collection)



Andrew Frederick Rock's *pièce de résistance*. This illustration of the NSR battery locomotive featured in *The Locomotive* published on 15th January 1918 and in *The Engineer* for 8th March 1918, so there is no doubt about it being in the condition in which it left Stoke Works.

6tons 8cwt. Shunting and warning signals are given by a 12-Volt 'Klaxon' horn connected to six of the accumulators and actuated by a hand push within easy reach of the driver."

The report concluded by stating that, through the courtesy of NSR's officials, the magazine's representatives had the privilege of attending some trials of the locomotive at Stoke, when its performance fulfilled all the conditions required. The cost of the locomotive was £1,346 of which £906 was the cost of the battery and related electrical equipment.[16] The rationale behind the NSR providing the locomotive on a permanent basis to the copper works has not been determined but Thomas Bolton purchased the Cheadle Copper and Brass works in 1852 and the firm may well have inherited an obligation for the railway company to provide shunting power under a previous agreement. Bolton's undertook to charge the locomotive's batteries free. The locomotive spent all its working life at Oakamoor. It passed into LMS ownership in 1923 and was repainted in LMS maroon livery with LMS lettering on both sides but does not appear to have carried any number during the LMS regime. After Stoke Works closed in 1928, major repairs were undertaken at Derby Works.

On nationalisation of the railways, which took effect from 1st January 1948, the locomotive became the property of British Railways (BR), subsequently receiving a new livery complete with a BR lion and wheel emblem and the number B.E.L. 2. Following the closure of the factory at Oakamoor in 1962, the locomotive was officially withdrawn in June 1963 and put into storage at BR's Uttoxeter motive power depot (shed code 5E). At the instigation of George Dow,[17] it had its NSR livery restored at Crewe Electric Traction Depot between December 1964 and April 1965. It was then stored in the former LNWR goods shed at Stafford prior to being transferred in May 1968 to the Staffordshire County Museum at Shugborough. The locomotive became part of the Science Museum National Collection in 1975 and in 1984 was transferred to the National Railway Museum (NRM) at York. On 22nd April 1996 it was loaned to the preserved Churnet Valley Railway but was subsequently returned to the National Collection and is currently on display at Shildon. It is a splendid testimony to the memory of Andrew Frederick Rock.[18]

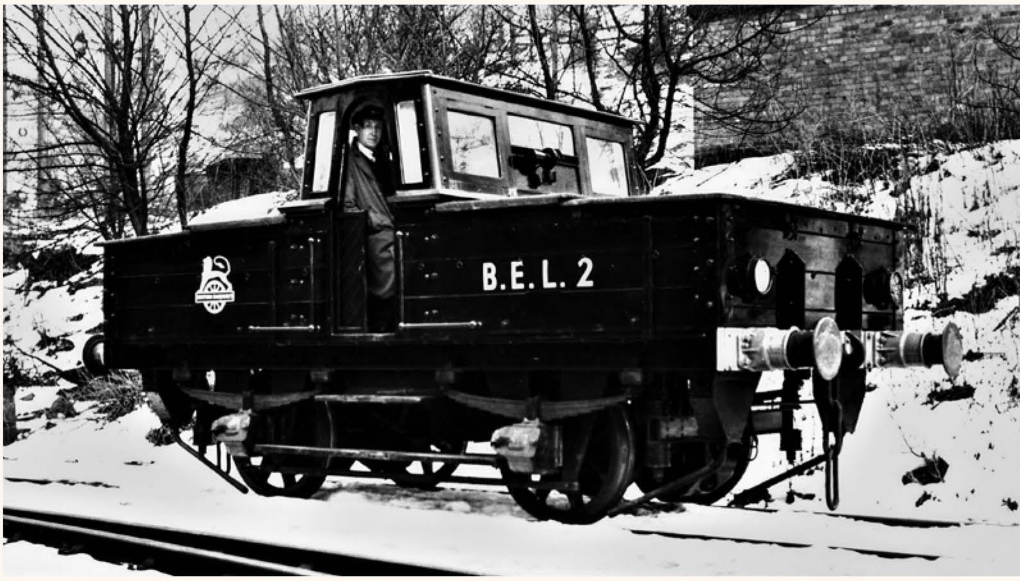
Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge the very valuable assistance received from the following fellow members of the North Staffordshire Railway Study Group in providing information and illustrations in relation to this article: Allan C. Baker, Chris Knight and Gerald Worland. Allan, as a professional engineer railwayman, has also cast his technical eye over the text which is much the richer for his attention. The unaccredited illustrations are either from my camera or my collection. See the advertisement on the inside back cover for more details of the North Staffordshire Railway Study Group.

References

1. His initiation date was 18th February 1907.
2. NA. RAIL 532/18. NSR Traffic Committee, 18th January 1870, Minute 6537.
3. *The Railway Magazine*, Vol.IV, February 1899, Illustrated Interview No.20.
4. Illuminated Address presented to the NSR Chairman and Directors on 12th November 1907.
5. His father was Samuel Jabez Dean (1846-1918) who was for many years the station master at Longport.
6. *The Railway Magazine*, Vol.XXXV, No.205, July 1914.
7. NA RAIL 532/21, NSR Traffic & Finance Committee, 28th April 1896 and 9th November 1897, Minutes 17370 and 18219.
8. NA RAIL 532/2, NSR 114th Half-Yearly Meeting of Proprietors, 10th February 1903.
9. *Staffordshire Sentinel*, 27th April 1909. The Chester Races concerned were held between 4-6 May 1909.
10. Later known as Cockshute.
11. *The Staffordshire Advertiser*, 22nd October 1904.
12. The whole saga is explained in great detail in *Harecastle's Canal and Railway Tunnels* by Allan C. Baker and Mike G. Fell, OBE, Lightmoor Press, 2019, ISBN 978-1-911038-62-7.
13. Under the Electricity Act 1947, 14 area electricity boards were created to distribute electricity to consumers. The Midlands Electricity Board was one of those area boards and came into operation on vesting day, 1st April 1948.
14. NA RAIL 532/23, NSR Traffic & Finance Committee, 16th October 1917, Minute 29551.
15. *The Locomotive*, Vol.XXIV, 15 January 1918; *The Engineer*, Vol.125, 8 March 1918; *The Railway Gazette*, 29 March 1918; *The Railway Magazine*, Vol.XLII, May 1918.
16. *The Churnet Valley Railway* by Basil Jeuda, Lightmoor Press, 1999. ISBN 1 899889 05 1.
17. George Dow (1907-1987) ended his long railway career as BR Divisional Manager, Stoke-on-Trent, retiring in 1968.
18. The history of the locomotive is covered in great detail in an article by the author entitled 'Battery Power at Oakamoor' which appeared in Journal No.51 published by the North Staffordshire Railway Study Group in April 2022.

The battery locomotive is seen here at Oakamoor in British Railways days. The driver in the rather cramped cab is William (Bill) Lewis Prime (1898-1978), the second of the only two gentlemen allocated to drive the locomotive. Bill took over from Arthur Adams following his untimely death in November 1932. (SLS Library Collection)



A WOODHOUSE STATION FAMILY

BY BARRY TAYLOR

This interesting sepia photograph was taken by 'Lanternist & Photographer' B. Brough of Sheffield Road, Chesterfield, and features Woodhouse station on the Manchester, Sheffield & Lincolnshire Railway (MSLR) line just to the east of Sheffield. The image is unfortunately undated and without any further details but analysis of, in particular, the female clothing styles indicates a quite specific date of around 1890. At this time the station was only around fifteen years old, having been constructed in the typical 'double pavilion' style in 1875 to replace an earlier facility at Woodhouse Junction, on an inconvenient site just 700 yards to the east. The Junction station had opened in 1850 at a point where the branch to Beighton and beyond left the original MSLR 1849 main route to Retford and Gainsborough.

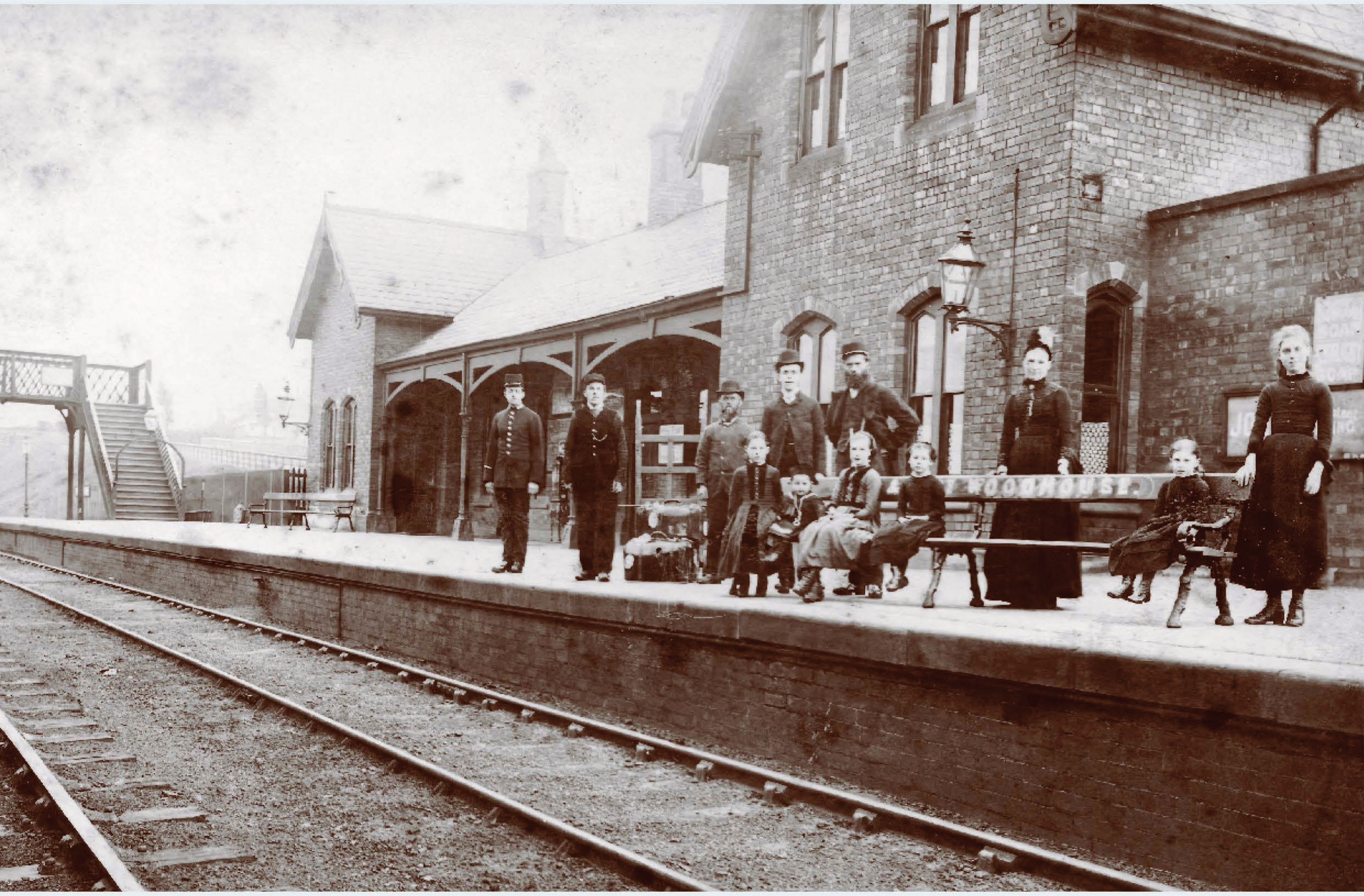
The photographer has obviously positioned the group carefully to reveal the station name on the bench, but this has also had the effect of obscuring some other lettering, which includes an ampersand. This initially appeared to suggest that the station was jointly named with another location, but research has confirmed that this was never the case and the illusion was actually caused by the unusual practice of the railway company including its 'MS&LR' initials on the bench.

Reference to the 1891 census reveals that William Parkin Golden was then the station master and recorded with him in the station house at that date were his wife Elizabeth, and seven children. These consisted of six daughters and one son, ranging in ages from Annie (27) through to the youngest Arthur (5). The photograph, however, only includes six children, and it seems probable that the eldest daughter Annie, who was a teacher, was away at the time, with the girl on the right being the next eldest Lilly (16). In fact the family consisted of two other daughters who were also recorded as working away from home at the time of the census and there was also another daughter who had died at an early age in 1871.

William Golden was born in Ecclesfield in 1842 and married Elizabeth Lax from Tankersley in 1863. His railway employment seems to have commenced during that decade and by 1871 they were living at Sandal & Agbrigg station on the West Riding & Grimsby Joint Railway near Wakefield, where William was the station master. The 1881 census records that they had moved with their increasing family to another MSLR station at Kirton in Lindsay in Lincolnshire. It is not known for how long the family was at Woodhouse station, but by 1901 they had uprooted again and William was station master at the much more prestigious location of Chesterfield, with son Arthur having followed in his railway footsteps as a goods clerk. William died in Chesterfield in 1905 at the age of 63.

The photograph also includes other railway staff from Woodhouse station, probably porters, signalmen and permanent way workers, many of whom will have lived nearby in the 'railway village' formed by the properties in Furnace Lane and Junction Terrace.

At the time of the photograph Woodhouse station would have been served by passenger services between Sheffield Victoria and Retford, Gainsborough, Lincoln and Grimsby, and to Chesterfield via the Beighton line. Within a decade, with the MSLR empire expanding through its 'London Extension' and becoming the Great Central Railway, through expresses between Manchester, Sheffield, Nottingham and London Marylebone would also have passed though the station. Goods traffic would also have been significant, with Woodhouse sidings, located just to the south of the station, being the hub for local coal traffic from nearby Orgreave, Treeton and Birley Collieries. Despite the wholesale closure of the collieries and the much-lamented loss of the through express traffic, the unmanned Woodhouse station remains open today for passengers on the Sheffield to Newark and Lincoln route operated by Northern Trains and the original station building, the one-time home of the Golden family, has also survived intact.



Readers' Forum

Letters intended for publication should ideally add extra detail to our articles (or offer corrections of course!) and not be too long, consistent with the detail they offer. As always, we are sorry that space and time prevent us from printing them all or sending personal replies. ED.

Jeffrey Wells

It's always a sad moment when we must record the passing of a regular contributor to *Backtrack* and recently we lost Jeffrey Wells who in fact was our second longest-serving author. Jeff's first appearance in *BT*, on the subject of the Werneth Incline at Oldham, came in Volume 4 No.1, January/February 1990 – even before I became involved! Over the intervening years Jeff's offerings spanned a wide variety of subjects, the last centred on Crewe as recently as this April's issue. However, a true Lancastrian, I tend to think Jeff's favourite writings related to the railways in his local areas, not least his book on the railways of my home town, Bury, and I enjoyed our asides about the fortunes (or otherwise!) of our local football teams. BT will miss him, but fortunately we have a number of Jeff's articles still on file and his wife has most kindly indicated we may continue to use them. Our condolences go out to his family. **Ed.**

The Birkenhead Joint Line

My mistake, the photograph of the 0-6-0PT at Thurstaston in 1952 on p218 (April) should have been attributed to R. Hewitt/Stephenson Locomotive Society.

Stan Yates

Crewe – the hub of the system

Being a native of Crewe, I very much enjoyed reading the article by Jeffry Wells about Crewe and its railways (April).

However, it is interesting to ponder on how railway developments and expansion in the nineteenth century have created issues for Crewe into the 21st century. Like so many 'one horse towns', the town has never really recovered economically from the closure of Crewe Works and rundown of other associated rail functions. Some areas in Crewe are considered to be the most deprived in England.

Furthermore, the plethora of rail lines converging on Crewe generated a considerable number of road bridges in the town which need constant closure and maintenance. In addition, they have the effect of 'dividing' the town up. For instance, the main retail park, in Crewe, triangular in shape, is crammed between the West Coast Main Line and the line to Manchester. Considering the huge role railways played in Crewe's development, it seems ironic that the town's 'floor plan', due to rail lines, is cast in stone, in perpetuity!

Roy Wilkinson, Nantwich, Ches.

As a member of the LNWR society and as one who is acknowledged as having given some help in finding some information for this article, I would appreciate some comments being allowed.

Firstly the photograph on p198, this I think is Platform 4, the main southbound or up-side platform, the Nantwich road bridge arch can be seen beyond the stairs; if this were Platform 1 they would not be visible, also the early architecture is prominent and was not repeated on the later Platform 1. The photograph on p 199 shows No.7803 Bradley Manor at the head of a Wellington train – in fact this is the return working to Whitchurch at 7.50pm of a through service from Aberystwyth which arrived in Crewe at 5.20pm. As a trainspotter in the early/mid '50s, I along with a few school pals regularly waited before going home for tea, especially to see which 'Manor ' class would be on this service.

Under the heading of station improvements of 1890-1907, the statement is made that there was a lack of space to the east and west of the station to enable extensions to be made because of the Earl of Crewe's land to the east and the town to the west plus Queen's Park to the east.. There was ample space to the west as that was where all the extensions were placed , as were the Chester goods lines plus the Liverpool and Manchester independent goods lines. Queen's Park was nearly two miles to the north west of the station and to the west of the Chester line, not to the east of the station, and therefore in no way interfered with the station remodelling. Under the same heading, a quote from the *Blackburn Standard* is quoted that the Old Works were to be demolished to create siding space . This comment is left hanging in the air without explanation, but this did not happen. The Old Works survived in its entirety until the early 1980s, I remember being conducted through the works before demolition with a group which was intent on forming a railway museum within them. This is now partially occupied by the Crewe Heritage site.

David Patrick, by email

Having worked at Crewe for the first twelve years of my railway career, I have been interested in Jeffrey Wells's article in the April issue. However, I will contain my comments to the photograph on p199 of a GWR interloper at Crewe. While the author suggests it is a train to Wellington, this is almost certainly not the case and would in fact, be one headed for the former Cambrian section, which left the main line to Shrewsbury at Whitchurch, the engine at the time, the early 1960s I would suggest, being allocated to Machynlleth. In BR days the Wellington trains were always diagrammed for engines from that shed and while in my trainspotting days, usually GWR pannier tanks; latterly the predominant motive power consisted of the LMS Ivatt Class 2 2-6-2 tank engines which Wellington had an allocation of. Wellington never had an allocation of 'Manors'.

An interesting aspect of Western Region trains working into Crewe was that engines from the Wellington direction, the branch leaving the Shrewsbury line at Nantwich, to run via Market Drayton, always used the former GWR shed at Gresty Lane, while those from the former Cambrian section, went to either the North or South sheds for turning and servicing, prior to returning. This was, of course, a legacy of pre-nationalisation days and continued until passenger services on the line to Wellington were withdrawn and Gresty Lane shed closed. Old traditions died hard in these parts! The train in question would probably be for Oswestry, although on summer Saturdays there was a through working to Aberystwyth.

When I was serving part of my apprenticeship at Crewe North Shed, while living in Newcastle-under-Lyme, I used to take the 5.30pm Derby train on my way home to Etruria. While waiting to depart from Platform 5A, a train from the Cambrian would arrive in 4B opposite. This was the 3.50pm from Oswestry, due at 5.19pm, with a through coach from Aberystwyth, always with an immaculate Oswestry'Manor'. My, how it brightened up the scene with its gleaming brass and copper! By that time, apart from Saturdays, this was the only through train to Crewe off the former Cambrian, all the others terminated at Whitchurch, where the engines used the former LNWR shed. About the same time a London train from Liverpool arrived in Platform 4, which changed engines and while it was diagrammed for an EE Type 4 diesel, it was as often as not, a Crewe 'Duchess', so I always consulted the engine arrangements board before leaving the shed to see what the engine would be! It would depart before the Cambrian arrived, so my view was not blocked. Geoff Sands – later the Curator at Bressingham – was the shed master at the time and a keen enthusiast of these engines, so the 5A ones were always kept clean. Oh for a camera!

Allan C. Baker, by email

Railways and Edinburghshire

Since the publication of my article under the title above in the January issue, new information has come to light. I have recently obtained a copy of a publication by a local, Dalkeith, historian, Brian Scott. It is entitled *Early Railways of Dalkeith* and published by the Dalkeith Museum. (It has neither ISBN nor publication date.) The book appears to be well researched and the author acknowledges the help of the NBR Study Group. It can be obtained via the Museum's website.

I had remarked, in the article, that I had seen very little in print about the Duke of Buccleuch's colliery railway, which ran across the streets of Dalkeith, and its successor, the NBR Monktonhall Junction to Hardengreen Junction branch. This book concentrates on these two lines. It is illustrated with line drawings and reproductions of early maps, all by the author, who is a competent draughtsman, as well as with photographs from more recent years.

Brian Scott, in his book, confirms the dates and information given in my article in relation to the Monktonhall to Hardengreen line. However, I had written that the Marquis of Lothian's viaduct across the South Esk was widened to take double track, and the timber superstructure and cast iron arches of his viaduct were replaced by ones in brick and stone, when the original E&D line was extended to Hawick in the late 1840s. My source for this was Paul Anderson's (and Bill Smith's) *Illustrated History of Edinburgh's Railways*. Mr. Scott is quite clear that this was not the case. A new stone viaduct, the one that's still in use on the Borders Railway, was provided, parallel to, and to the west of, the Marquis's viaduct. Scott points out where remains of the alignment of the Marquis's viaduct, albeit they are very few, can be traced and adduces map evidence to support his case.

Leonard Rogers, Bonnyrigg, Midlothian

The 'Sprat & Winkle' line

If I may make one minor correction to Bruce Laws' article (January), the M&SWJR's 2-6-0s Nos.14 and 16 were not based on a locomotive built for South Australia, but were close copies of the New South Wales Government Railways' '205' Class, 70 of which which were built by Beyer Peacock between 1881 and 1885. It has frequently been said that No 14 was originally ordered by a railway either in South America or in Australia, which considering its design does seem quite likely, but as far as I am aware no evidence has ever been produced to support this claim.

Darryl Grant, Australia

2-10-2s in trouble

Philip Atkins's informative and enjoyable article (January) made reference to the Australian-designed SCOA-P wheels that were fitted to both the Iranian and Greek 2-10-2s. More than 400 locomotives (that I know of, there may have been more) were built in Great Britain with SCOA-P wheels, not only by the Vulcan Foundry but also by Robert Stephenson & Hawthorn's and the North British Locomotive Co. In addition to the Iranian 2-10-2s, the Vulcan Foundry locomotives included 4-6-2s for Queensland, 4-8-2s for the Gold Coast and Tasmania, 2-8-0s for Victoria and 2-8-4s for the East African Railways. Those built by NBL were 4-6-4s for Victoria and more 2-8-4s for the East African Railways, while the RSH locomotives were 4-6-2s for Tasmania and 2-6-2s and 2-6-4Ts for India. According to *The Locomotive Magazine* of 14th July 1951, a licence to manufacture SCOA-P wheels had been granted to a British firm, K & L Steelfounders and Engineers of Letchworth, Herts.

Not surprisingly, locomotives with SCOA-P wheels were also built in Australia, but only a few appear to have been built in other counties. Apart from the Italian-built 2-10-2s for Greece, I have information that some 4-8-4s built in Spain had SCOA-P wheels but I have not been able to confirm this.

Incidentally, SCOA-P stood for Steel Company of Australia – Paynter. Frederick Charles Paynter was an engineer and a director of the Steel Company of Australia; he was also the designer of the SCOA-P wheels.

Darryl Grant, Australia

By rail to the Crystal Palace

Mention of the Crystal Palace and its "vast concert organ" in Geoffrey Skelsey's recent article (March) brought to mind the connections between pipe organs, the Crystal Palace and the railways. There's plenty to investigate for the historian.

Just as it had on perceptions of rail travel, so the Great Exhibition had a catalytic effect on British organ building, still perceptible today: technology, timbre, reputations for organ builders. All this was commensurate with the aims of the Exhibition as articulated by Mr. Skelsey: "improved technical education and innovative industry".

In Hyde Park in 1851 the Palace contained at least ten pipe organs, from across Europe. One wonders how they got to central London. The railway surely had an unsung role, as it did throughout the Victorian era as thousands of pipe organs were supplied nationwide. Delightfully, an organ in Kent today retains a South Eastern Railway goods label affixed to its interior. It was delivered by the SER to Cranbrook station.

Then there are the direct technological connections between organs and railways (and the steam engine more generally). James Watt built an organ! Even in the past decade, the workshop of a preserved railway made brass components for a new organ.

But here I really do descend into the dark depths of organology. I must exercise restraint, and desist!

Tom Bell, Lancashire

Past signs

I fear the date for the completion of Northampton's then new station, in the caption in Geoffrey Skelsey's interesting piece on 'Past Signs' (*BT* April), is rather askew. It was completed in 1966. Indeed I photographed it, alongside its predecessor before that was demolished, on 9th July that year. I would, however, agree with him that it was 'less-than-inspiring', although much more appreciated by Northampton than the old which was a barn of a place, rambling, cold and uninviting – I doubt whether many staff mourned its going – never more so than on a very cold and frosty December evening in 1963 when I returned home after my first term at London University. Not that home was any more cheering: an 1851 three-storey Northampton town house without central heating. It was a cold supper while the rest of the family got on with homework or other activities and no enquiries as to how that first term had gone.

Robin Leleux, Ilkley

The Scottish Quartet

On p245 of the April issue of *Backtrack* you picture HR No 103 at at Leeds Holbeck shed having returned from filming *Those Magnificent Men in their Flying Machines* on the Bedford to Sandy line. This film was made on the then recently closed Bedford to Hitchin line and not the Bedford to Sandy line.

Anthony Farndon, London

BackTrack BINDERS AND CASEBINDING

BINDERS

Stocks are now available of 12-issue binders of *Backtrack* in green gold blocked!

United Kingdom
(inc. VAT + p/p). £14.00

Europe including
Republic of Ireland
(inc. VAT + p/p) £20.00

Overseas outside Europe
(inc. VAT + p/p) £30.00

Payments for back issues and binders should be by cheque payable to 'Pendragon Publishing' and sent to the address below. Card payments can also be accepted by post or telephone (01347 824397 9am-5pm Mon-Fri only) quoting also the last 3 digits of the security number on the back of the card. Allow 28 days for delivery.

PENDRAGON PUBLISHING · PO BOX NO.3
EASINGWOLD · YORK · YO61 3YS · UK

BookReviews

|★★★★★ Excellent|★★★★ Very Good|★★★ Good|★★ Fair|★ Poor|

LNER K Class 2-6-0s - from GNR to BR

By John Ryan. Published by Great Northern Books Ltd. ISBN 978-1-914227-75-2. £30.00. 144pp A4 hardback.

Photograph albums come a-plenty and if they focus on your favourite subject they they're the sort of things you'll appreciate and enjoy. Many albums concern themselves not surprisingly with the popular and more glamorous express engines and main line routes, but it is surely 'proper' that the 'working' class mixed traffic motive power can bask in its own importance.

Thus we have this book dedicated to the 2-6-0 classes of the London & North Eastern Railway, the first of which took to the rails in 1912, The extensive stock of the LNER's K2 and K3 Classes were widely used around the company's system, with particularly the K2s finding a home in Scotland most notably on the West Highland line, far removed from the home territory of the Great Northern lands.

The six K4s of 1937 were three-cylinder machines designed especially for the heavy haulage required over the mountainous West Highland line and one of them, *The Great Marquess,* was later bought for preservation.

At the end of the LNER era the two-cylinder K1 Class of A. H. Peppercorn completed the company's long association with the 2-6-0 genre, though delivered after nationalisation, many lasting till the closing years of steam in the North East.

With a book of this size there is ample room for a very generous picture selection, with coverage of all variations of the locomotives, all the areas with which they were associated, all types of trains worked. The photographs are presented to advantage by being largely two to a spread and no more than three. Most are black and white though there are some very choice colour shots, all to high standards of reproduction.

★★★ **MB**

Bill Hoole - Engineman Extraordinary

By P. W. B. Semmens. Published by Crécy Publishing Ltd. ISBN 978-1-800353-18-3 £9.99.. 312pp A5 size softback.

This is a reprint of an Ian Allan book first published in 1966 and follows the career of a locomotive driver of the sort we shan't be seeing again: a steam footplateman, top link at that, whose exploits and driving panache made his name known to enthusiasts – in his case on the East Coast Main Line.

Bill Hoole was born in Liverpool and began his footplate career there on the Great Central Railway, moving to Neaden shed in London in search of better opportunities, and from there to King's Cross 'Top Shed'. Through all these years Bill was following the long ladder-climbing career of the would-be locomotive driver – cleaner, fireman, at last driver and up the 'links' to the top one. Eventually Bill was driving the LNER's celebrated A4 Pacifics on such prestigious workings as the 'Non-Stop' to Edinburgh. His reputation for both skilfull locomotive handling and penchant for fast running made him in due course a sought-after choice for enthusiasts' special trains, these including the running of the preserved GNR Atlantics in 1953 and achieving 112mph, a post-war speed record for steam, on *Sir Nigel Gresley* in 1959 not long before he retired.

Following his retirement Bill Hoole took on a new life as a driver on the Festiniog Railway, mostly on the veteran locomotive *Prince*. It was in 1966 that a young future *BT* editor stood looking admiringly at the engine after a day on the FR during a family holiday and was invited by Mr. Hoole to ride on the footplate with him across the Cob to Boston Lodge sheds, with my parents in the tender. My first footplate ride! The original edition of this book was my choice of Christmas present that year.

This is a 'cheap and cheerful' edition of this work: the photographs seem to have been scanned from the original book and are small and, to be honest, not very good, while the numbering of the pages in the index is rather at odds with the actualité at times. But it is still a jolly good read!

★★★ **MB**

Steam around Scotland

By Michael Welch. Published by Rails Publishing, hardback, 112 pages, priced £19.95 ISBN 978-1-5414-493-5

So has the 'cost of living crisis' finally reached railway publishing and enthusiasm?

Your reviewer has a number of volumes, Steam in the English/Welsh/Scottish Landscape' for examples, by this author, under this imprint and in this format in his 'library' and they are predominantly colour albums. This latest offering is determinedly monochrome! But no worse for that, the cover picture, two B1s blazing away from Fort William, under an unrelieved black title is arresting indeed.

The contents of the book are a wide-ranging selection of photographs of steam locomotives at work around all parts of Scotland – and, quite coyly, 'including 'Carlisle', in the British Railways era. So, A4s, 'Black 5s' Caley 0-4-4Ts, Pickersgill 4-4-0s with the odd 'Crab', 2P and 'Clan' thrown in for good measure abound, all the images beautifully reproduced and supported by the expansive and informative captions much enjoyed by this reviewer. If steam locomotives in Scotland fascinate then this is a book for you, with excellent design and production values and with engaging information to be imparted, the black and white pictorial album is certainly still be a force to be reckoned with!

★★★★ **DWM**

The Glorious Years of the LMS, London Midland and Scottish Railway *and* The Glorious Years of the GWR, Great Western Railway

Both by Peter Tuffrey, Both published by Great Northern, hardback, both 160 pages and priced at £27.50. ISBN numbers (LMS) 978-1 914227-55-4 and (GWR) 978 -1 -914227-74-5.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s as the memory of the steam railway faded and railway nostalgia burgeoned the railway publishing giant of the day, Ian Allan, came out with a series of black and white pictorials of the bygone railway scene, a Great Western Album and three volumes relating to the LMS. And, 50 years on, history repeats itself in these stylish offerings from Great Northern.

Both have a thumbnail sketch of the history of their respective company and then go on to feature extensive coverage of locomotives, carriages, road motors and, in the LMS case, the company's contribution to the war effort.

Your reviewer was particularly taken with the section on stations contained within each volume. The photographs are crisply reproduced but in some cases considerably more detail in the captions would have been appreciated.

These two books probably don't tell us anything particularly new – but who of a GW or LMS persuasion will be able to resist?

★★★ **DWM**

THE NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE RAILWAY STUDY GROUP

Want to know more about the North Staffordshire Railway?

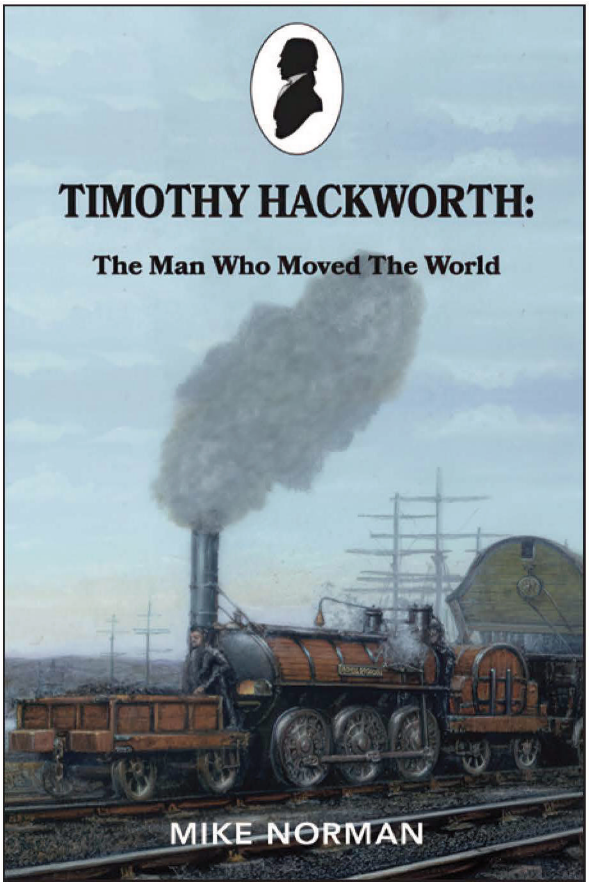
Join the North Staffordshire Railway Study Group.

Two editions of ***The Journal*** per year, plus four editions of the society newsletter ***Loop Lines***.

Membership £20 per year. For more information visit our website
nsrsg.org.uk/membership.php

The Station, Normacot.

NORTH STAFFORD



Visit: TIMOTHYHACKWORTH.COM

George Stephenson got the locomotive on the track, depended on Hackworth to keep it running

Subscribe to BackTrack

Why not join the growing list of BackTrack subscribers?

- **BackTrack subscribers receive their copies ahead of the due publication date – straight from the press!**
- **Assured delivery every month – no need to miss an issue.**
- **Insurance against any price increase during the life of the subscription.**

UK **£65.00**
Europe (inc. Republic of Ireland) **£110.00**
Overseas (outside Europe) **£125.00**

SAVE WHEN YOU SUBSCRIBE BY DIRECT DEBIT*

☐ **£60 per year or** ☐ **£5.00 monthly!**

*UK SUBSCRIBERS ONLY PLEASE TICK AS APPROPRIATE

Instructions to your Bank or Building Society to pay by Direct Debit

FOR WARNERS GROUP PUBLICATIONS OFFICIAL USE ONLY
This is not part of the instruction to your Bank or Building Society.

Originator's Identification Number
942240

DIRECT Debit

Bank/Building Society account number

Reference Number

Name and full postal address of your Bank or Building Society.

Bank/Building Society
To: The Manager
Address
Postcode

Signature(s)
Date

Name(s) of Account Holder(s)

Branch Sort Code

Instruction to your Bank or Building Society

Please pay Warners Group Publications Direct Debits from the account detailed in this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with Warners Group Publications and, if so, details will be passed electrically to my Bank/ Building Society.

Name ....

Address ....

....

....

By Post: Backtrack Subscriptions Dept., Warners, West Street, Bourne. Lincs. PE10 9PH. Sterling cheques payable to 'Pendragon Publishing' or quote card details inc. expiry date, issue number (if applicable) and 3-digit CSC number.

By Phone: Ring 01778 392024 for BackTrack hotline *or* Fax 01778 421706.

By Email: subscriptions@warnersgroup.co.uk

Online: https://www.mymagazinesub.co.uk/backtrack

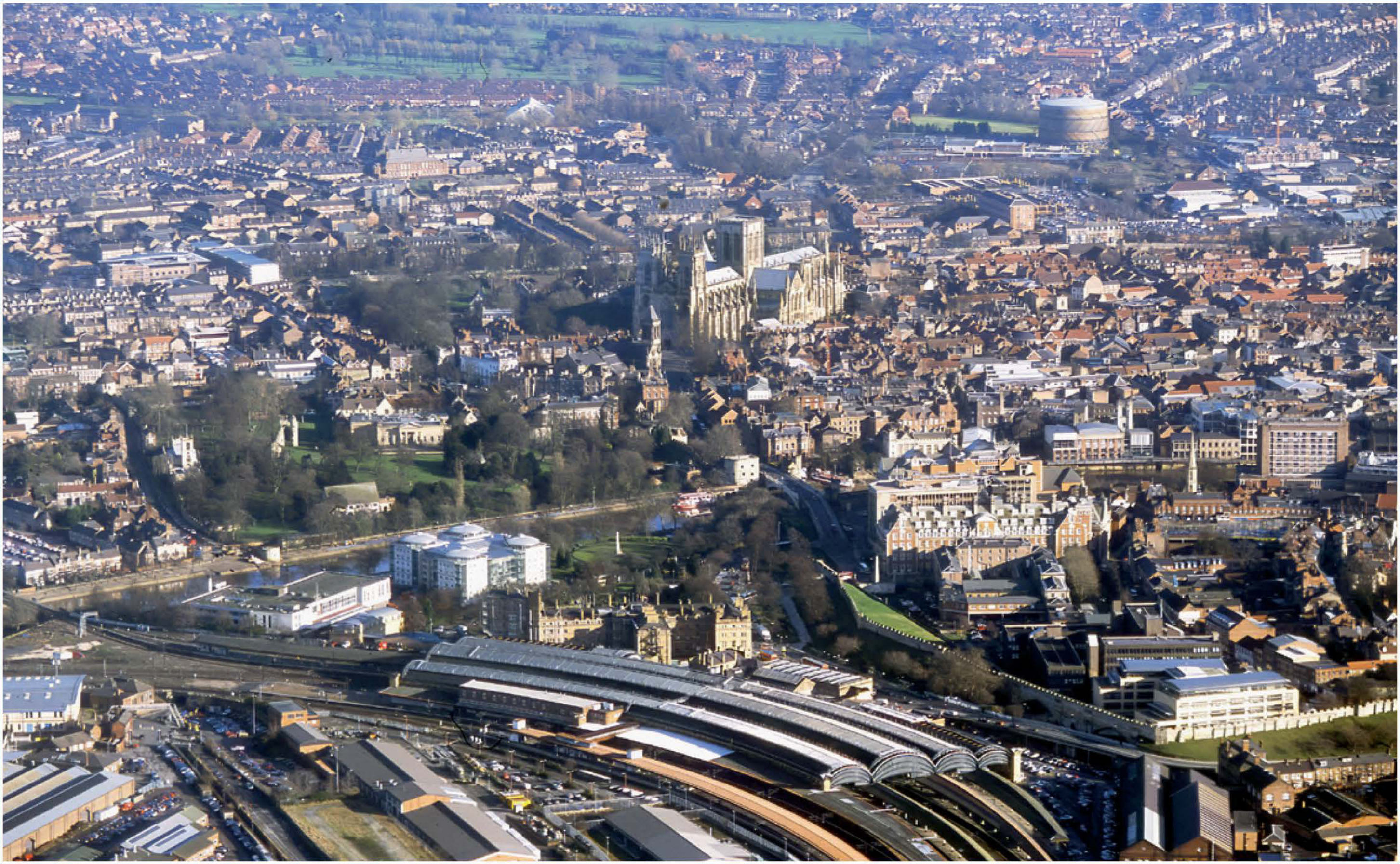
For Digital Edition subscriptions go to www.pocketmags.com

The **NEXT ISSUE** of **BackTrack** will be available on **19th JUNE**

BRITAIN'S LEADING HISTORICAL RAILWAY JOURNAL

BackTrack

WWW.PENDRAGONPUBLISHING.CO.UK



THE EYE IN THE SKY OVER YORK

York viewed from a helicopter on 23rd January 2003. Whilst York Minster is rightly at the centre of the scene, there is much of railway interest to note. The station is towards the lower centre with the Royal Station Hotel – or the Royal York as it is now – in front of it. To the left (north) of the station the East Coast Main Line curves round and out of the picture, leaving the Scarborough line to cross the River Ouse on Scarborough Bridge. The riverside path passes the Yorkshire Museum and Gardens, with a river cruiser coming into view under the Ouse Bridge. Returning to the station, at the bottom left-hand corner is the National Railway Museum's Station Hall (the former goods depot) and the then new Signalling Centre in the fenced area opposite Platform 11. To the bottom right is the arch cut through the city walls to enable the railway to reach the original 1841 station, going under the Queen Street bridge (recently demolished) in front of the Railway Institute. Beyond the site of the old station the large red brick building is the former North Eastern Railway headquarters, now a decidely upmarket hotel.
(Gavin Morrison)

PENDRAGON PUBLISHING

RECORDING THE HISTORY OF BRITAIN'S RAILWAYS